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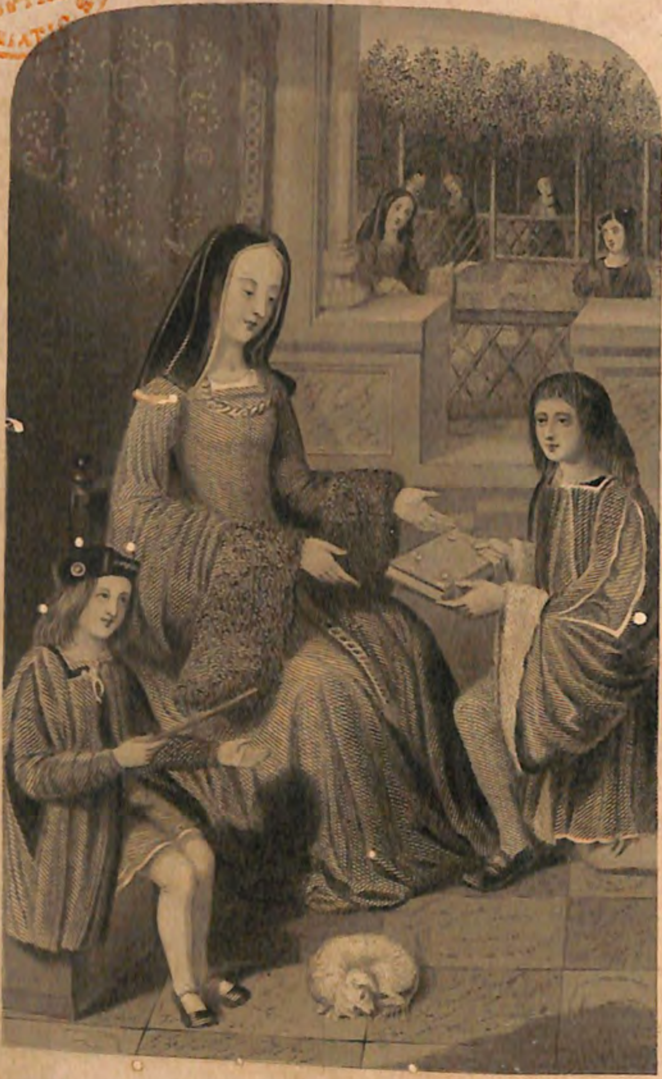

Louise de Savoye,
Duchesse D'Angoulême.
with her Son, Francis 1st when in the
6th Year of his age.

THE LIFE OF

MARGUERITE D'ANGOULÊME,

QUEEN OF NAVARRE,

DUCHESSE D'ALENÇON AND DE BERRY,

SISTER OF FRANCIS I., KING OF FRANCE.

FROM NUMEROUS UNPUBLISHED SOURCES, INCLUDING MS. DOCUMENTS
IN THE BIBLIOTHEQUE IMPERIALE, AND THE ARCHIVES DU ROYAUME DE FRANCE,
AND ALSO THE PRIVATE CORRESPONDENCE OF QUEEN MARGUERITE
WITH FRANCIS I., &c.

BY

MARTHA WALKER FREER.

LUUA 9 2.

> "La Royne Marguerite,
> La plus belle fleur d'élite,
> Qu'onques la terre enfanta."
> RONSARD.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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LIFE OF

MARGUERITE, QUEEN OF NAVARRE.

CHAPTER I.

Domestic happiness of the king and queen of Navarre—Message sent to Marguerite by the marchioness of Montferrat—Her correspondence with the king and with Montmorency on the subject—Indisposition of the queen of Navarre—Her departure from St. Germain—Illness of Madame—Progress of hostilities in Italy—Captivity of the princes in Spain—Marguerite accompanies the duchess d'Angoulême to Fontainebleau—The delicate health of the queen—Her correspondence with the king and with the marshal de Montmorency—Her poetical epistle to king Francis—His reply—Letter written by Erasmus to queen Marguerite—The writings of Erasmus are condemned by the Sorbonne—Queen Marguerite receives news of the capture of Pavia—Her letter to her brother on the occasion—Her continued resentment against the emperor—Correspondence with Francis—The Assembly of Notables—The States decide the question, whether the king is bound by the treaty of Madrid to return into captivity, in the negative, and vote a sum for the ransom of the princes—Circumstances which extenuated the violation of the treaty of Madrid.

THE Queen of Navarre, after the celebration of her marriage, remained at St. Germain-en-Laye, while the king, accompanied by Madame, quitted Paris, and after visiting Blois, and other towns of his dominions, took up his abode at Fontainebleau.

For the first time in her life, Marguerite beheld the departure of Francis and his court without sorrow: no expressions of impatient anxiety to be with the king and her mother escape her in her correspondence. The sincerest attachment subsisted between Marguerite and the king of Navarre, heightened perhaps by the opposition that Francis had made to their union. An intimate similarity of tastes united them; they both ardently loved art, literature, and science: Henry also sympathized in her opinions on reform in the Church, though those principles did not as yet exercise the same sway over his mind. The dignified address of the king of Navarre, and his energy of character, contributed to insure him the respect of his consort. The duke d'Alençon derived his importance from his union with the sister of the king; his pusillanimity of character otherwise would have consigned him to oblivion; Marguerite, however, now felt proud of her conquest. When the emperor Charles V. visited the French court some years subsequently, he declared that, the accomplished Francis I. excepted, the king of Navarre was the only man he had seen in France who perfectly united the characters of the valiant soldier and the refined gentleman.* The queen was therefore gratified at her husband's pre-eminence, and at seeing his abilities appreciated, and even compared with those of the king himself. The enthusiastic interest with which Marguerite mentions in all her letters the name of the king of Navarre, taken in contrast with the utter silence she observed during the period of her union with the duke d'Alençon as to the latter's proceedings, affords a strong proof of her domestic happiness.

While Marguerite was sojourning at St. Germain, she received a message from Anne d'Alençon, marchioness de Montferrat, the youngest sister of her late husband, praying her intercession with the king to prevent the confiscation of some lands situated in the marquisate of Montferrat, which having recently appertained to the chancellor Gattinara, were liable to be seized, with other estates belonging to him, in execution of a decree of the French council. The chancellor was a native of Piedmont, and possessed considerable property there, and in various parts of Savoy, bestowed upon him by his Imperial master. After the return of Francis to his kingdom, all the lands appertaining to Gattinara lying within the dominion of France beyond the Alps, were declared forfeited, and bestowed by the king on Francis, marquis de Saluzzo, brother of the general of the French forces in Italy.* Marguerite's sister-in-law had recently become a widow; and as she bore no son to her husband, Guillaume Paleologus VIII., his territories were claimed by his nearest male heir, the marquis of Saluzzo, and by the marquis of Mantua, who had espoused the eldest daughter of the deceased prince. The demands of the House of Saluzzo were supported by Francis, which placed the property of the marchioness in still greater jeopardy; for as the estates in question were situated within the marquisate of Montferrat, the penurious character of Saluzzo rendered it probable, in case his brother established his claim, that he would procure the execution of the decree to its very letter. The arbitrary seizure of the property of the marchioness of Montferrat on pretence that the lands once appertained to Gattinara, can be explained only on the grounds that she had been incautiously persuaded to become their purchaser by the chancellor, who, aware of the enmity felt towards him by Francis, sought to avert the probable decree confiscating his lands in Savoy, by disposing of them as quickly as possible, before the king's release from captivity. Anne d'Alençon,† therefore, was menaced with the penalty of her imprudence in having entered into pecuniary transactions with the arch-enemy of France; for the lands which she had purchased, in common with the other domains belonging to Gattinara, were bestowed by the decree of confiscation on Saluzzo. The injustice of the measure, however, was strongly felt by Marguerite; the circumstances of her sister-in-law, besides, were far from prosperous, and would be seriously affected by the execution of the decree. She therefore readily promised her mediation.

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* Cayet,—Chronologie Novenaire.

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* Michel Antoine XII., marquis of Saluzzo, had three brothers, Jean Louis, François, who was brought up with Francis I., and Gabriel. They were the sons of Marguerite de Foix, niece of Louis XII., and sister of Germaine, queen of Arragon.

† Anne d'Alençon was married in August, 1508, to Guillaume Paleologus, marquis of Montferrat.

The undertaking, however, was one of some difficulty; for Francis was much indisposed to favour the marchioness, as it had been reported that she had spoken disrespectfully of him—a charge which acquired weight in the king's mind, from the fact of her recent dealings with Gattinara. Marguerite first wrote to Montmorency to request him to support her request: "I am obliged to trouble you to speak to the king on an affair that I have been requested to adjust by the ambassador of my sister, Madame la marquise. It is, that a grant has been made to Francis, marquis of Saluzzo, of all the confiscated lands belonging to the chancellor of the emperor. You see, therefore, that the property of my poor sister is liable to be seized, notwithstanding the services that she has rendered, and desires to render to the king. Her ambassador moreover assures me, that she is innocent of, and has never even heard the accusation that they prefer against her to the king. If the king would be graciously pleased to listen to M. de Lautrec, who would give him a true statement of her case, and not heed those who have long conspired to ruin the House of Montferrat, he would bestow a signal benefit and favour on my poor sister. I am writing to him a word on the subject; but as the case will take long to explain, I intrust it to you."* Marguerite writes with unusual warmth to Montmorency, in her earnest desire to avert the misfortune which menaced the marchioness and her young daughters; believing, as she did, that the words of her sister had been misrepresented by Saluzzo to serve his own purposes, and to ingratiate himself, by a show of zeal, with the king.

Marguerite's intercession with the king is likewise very urgent. "Monseigneur," writes she, "the ambassador of my sister the marchioness has applied to me, respecting the affair, which, when it pleases you to hear, M. le Grand† will recount. I beseech you, monseigneur, to take pity upon a mother and her children, who have no other desire than to do you service; never have I known my sister to be inspired with a contrary intention. Monsieur de Lautrec, and all who have had experience of her fidelity, witness, that for a widow and a foreigner in the country, she has done her utmost for you; a thing which I feel assured you will not forget. Monseigneur, considering that you even vouchsafe pardon to your enemies, it is impossible that you can refuse to befriend those who are of your own blood, and who have served you to the best of their power. My poor sister places her sole hope in you; and I beg you earnestly to observe, that he* who has spöken to you of her, has for long been most inimical to her House."† Marguerite evidently had a very indifferent opinion of the honour of the marquis de Saluzzo; whose subsequent treachery justifies her suspicion at this period. It is not on record whether the decree confiscating the domains of Gattinara in Piedmont was executed: the probabilities, however, are in the negative; as Francis, when his first impulse of passion subsided, would doubtless see the inexpediency of so puerile an act of vengeance. The marquisate of Montferrat, moreover, was not bestowed upon Saluzzo's brother, nor did the king take any measures to enforce his claim. The territory was eventually assigned by the emperor to the marquis of Mantua, in right of his consort Marguerite, daughter of the deceased marquis of Montferrat.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8550.

† Montmorency, grand master of the household.

In Marguerite, the relatives of her first husband found a constant and persevering patroness. Her influence was ever generously exerted in their behalf; though after the decease of the duke d'Alençon, his heirs scrupled not to give her serious annoyance. The personal estate of the duke d'Alençon was claimed by his widow; and a considerable sum likewise at the time of Marguerite's second marriage was owing to her by the duchess de Vendôme, and the marchioness of Montferrat, on account of the restitution of her dowry, which as she bore the duke no children, she had a right to demand back. The settlement of these claims, Marguerite, with the consent of the king of Navarre, delayed until some indefinite period; and a considerable portion of the money owing she eventually altogether relinquished. Upon matters of import, great or small, her relations unhesitatingly availed themselves of Marguerite's credit; and in numberless instances repaid her protection by flagrant ingratitude. There exists a letter from the queen of Navarre to the king, pleading in language eloquent in its earnestness, that he would be pleased to grant the duke de Vendôme a favourable issue to a lawsuit of the utmost consequence, then pending before the parliament. Marguerite concludes her letter with an emphatic assurance, that in making this petition she doubts not her brother's justice; "for," says she, "rather would I desire the death of this heart of mine, than that it should cease, sire, to render you justice."*

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* François, marquis of Saluzzo.

† MS. Bib. Roy. F. du Suppl. Fr. No. 52.

Marguerite was residing in retirement at St. Germain with her husband, when she received intelligence that the duchess d'Angoulême had again fallen seriously ill. Madame, anxious for her daughter's society, despatched Du Bellay, bishop of Bayonne, to conduct her back to court. The duchess was then sojourning at Blois, or Fontainebleau, though probably at this former palace. When the bishop arrived at St. Germain, Marguerite found herself too indisposed to comply with her mother's desire. The queen's illness arose from the probability which existed that she would soon give an heir to the crown of Navarre; and her trusty physician, Jean Goinret, steadily opposed her desire to set out to rejoin Madame, more especially as Marguerite had been confined to her room for some days previous to the arrival of the bishop. Marguerite, however, whose active spirit seldom yielded to illness or fatigue, would not suffer the bishop of Bayonne to depart; hoping from day to day to be able to accompany him to Blois. Her situation, meanwhile, was communicated as a matter of course by Goinret to the king. Marguerite also wrote to request her brother not to reveal her hope to Madame, that she might have the pleasure of communicating it herself.† Madame, however, soon began to grow impatient at her daughter's inexplicable delay; and she commanded Montmorency to write to inquire the reason why she heard nothing of her. This letter determined the queen to set out, although Montmorency's letter, and one she subsequently received from the king, assured her that the duchess was convalescent. "Mon nepveu," wrote the queen, in answer to Montmorency, "never was woman in greater distress than I, on learning that the illness of Madame has been more severe than I was told. I praise God that you can send me news of her amendment; and I thank you for the trouble you take to afford me the consolation I prize most, which is often to send me tidings." The illness of Madame was another severe attack of liver complaint, attended with excruciating suffering. These periodical illnesses profitably served to remind the proud and prosperous Louisa of Savoy, that her greatness could not exempt her from suffering in its severest form; and that her power was delegated from One under whose universal sceptre princes bowed. During the past twelve years of her life, Louisa had never experienced the blessing of six months of uninterrupted health. Her sufferings at times were intense; medical science at that period had made little progress; and a disease which probably in these days might have received prompt alleviation, was gradually making deadly inroad on a constitution originally never very strong.

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* MS. Bib. Roy. F. du Suppl. Fran., No. 112.

† MS. Bib. Roy. F. de Béth. No. 8550.

Marguerite, on her arrival at Blois, found her mother improved in health; but the joy felt by Madame at the return of her daughter, and her anxiety about the king's affairs, added to her inability to join him, brought on another relapse. She persisted in rising from bed earlier than it was thought prudent to do so by her medical attendants; and this, and various mental exertions which Madame could not be persuaded to refrain from, produced very serious effects on her health. The king was sojourning in Paris; Marguerite wrote to him there on her mother's condition. "Monseigneur, the honour and the good which it gives me often to receive your much prized letters, increases the delight I am feeling at the probable results of my present indisposition. But, monseigneur, even this joy is often converted into sorrow, perceiving, as I do, that the health of Madame is not yet equal to accomplish her desire of rejoining you. Since Wednesday last, she has been much worse than she has ever been from the time she first rose from bed; and in trying to do more than her strength permits, she retards her cure. This morning again she had a terrible fit of sickness. After all, I believe that her greatest evil and pain consists in being separated from you; but considering her debility and the bad weather, she could not travel without incurring danger."* Madame's recovery was tedious and unsteady; Marguerite remained with her at Blois, while the king of Navarre joined the king at Paris, or at St. Germain-en-Laye; for pressing affairs compelled Francis to remain in the vicinity of his capital.

The king, nevertheless, fascinated by the charms of Mademoiselle de Heilly, seemed to have lost all energy. Having given rein to his impetuous resentment against the emperor, and solaced by his open defiance of the stipulations enforced upon him, and his public acceptance of the League, Francis resumed his luxurious pleasures. The court, as heretofore, became an assemblage of all that was most eminent in the kingdom, for talents, rank, beauty, and accomplishments. The same round of splendid entertainments recommenced; and the king, immersed in intellectual enjoyments, and in the distractions afforded by brilliant pageants of perpetual recurrence, suffered even his enmity to Charles V. to become inactive.

Aware of this inertness on her son's part, Madame was therefore doubly anxious to supply the deficiency by her own energy and decision. The consequence of the king's careless indifference already manifested itself in most disastrous form. The greatest disorganization prevailed amongst the allies; the League, composed of princes possessing such opposite and conflicting interests, instead of presenting, as at first, an harmonious whole, was split into endless factions. Though all outwardly acknowledged the articles of the League as proclaimed at Cognac, and tardy military preparations were adopted conformably, yet each power was busily engaged in private negotiation. The emperor, against whom this vast confederation was arrayed, had been formally invited by a diplomatic fiction to join the League. Provided Charles tendered his adhesion, it was considerately stipulated by the allies that he was to retain the kingdom of Naples, and cede only the Milanese. The emperor's response to this summons was an attempt to undermine the fabric of the hostile confederation. Well versed in Italian politics; and aware that self-interest and expediency were incentives far more powerful than patriotism in the breast of the numerous petty potentates who reigned over Italy, he commenced by artfully arousing the besetting passion of each.

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* MS. Bib. Roy. F. du Suppl. Fran. No. 62.

Sforza was still besieged in his citadel of Milan when the duke de Bourbon arrived in Italy. The marquis del Guasto, nephew of Pescara, who assumed the command of the Imperial army on the decease of the latter, occupied Milan. His troops committed the most horrid excesses on its impoverished inhabitants. Famine, murder, desolation, and impiety, reigned within that city, once so flourishing. Money was extorted by tortures the most terrible; suicides of the leading citizens were of daily occurrence; for in their despair the miserable inhabitants deemed an uncertain hereafter preferable to the misfortune present to them. None might flee from the city; guards were posted at the gates, with orders to slay all who attempted to escape. Commerce was suspended; the streets of the splendid city were overgrown with grass; no man dare speak to his neighbour, for all lived in abject fear of the cruel tyrants desecrating their once peaceful homes with unheard-of outrage.* For months the citizens of Milan had thus been compelled to feed and lodge Del Guasto's sanguinary soldiery, when the duke de Bourbon arrived. In despair the citizens threw themselves at his feet, praying for release from their calamities. Bourbon replied in language of deep sympathy: he bewailed the lamentable condition of the city; and with seeming frankness declared that the failure of the supplies promised by the emperor was the cause of their woe, for that soldiers, like themselves, must be provided with food, raiment, and lodging. In tones of the deepest commiseration he implored them to make a last effort to furnish him with the sum of 30,000 ducats, the pay of the army for a month, when he would withdraw the troops from the town, and encamp without. "I know," said he, "that you have often been deceived by similar promises; but if I deceive you in this, may God, who now hears me, cause me to perish in the first battle or assault I give, and by the first shot fired by the enemy."* Bourbon's manner reassured the inhabitants of Milan: placing implicit trust on his oath, they raised with great effort the sum demanded, and brought it to the duke. With perfidious equivocation, Bourbon then caused a few regiments to be withdrawn from Milan, and quartered them in the suburbs of the city. In vain the people pleaded for the exact performance of the duke's solemn oath; they were driven from his presence at the sword's point, and the siege of the citadel continued with even aggravated horror. At length Sforza capitulated, and was permitted to retire to Como; from whence he fled and joined the confederate army at Lodi, commanded by the duke of Urbino.

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* Du Bellay.

The emperor, meantime, continued to negotiate with the duke of Milan, to induce him to submit, notwithstanding his gift of the duchy to Bourbon; with the king of France he still maintained secret relations to prevail upon him to fulfil the treaty of Madrid. The pope he tried to lure to his interests by promising him his support against the house of Colonna, inimical to Clement from hereditary as well as political feuds. The Colonna, in their turn, the emperor secretly excited to take arms against the pope; and the Venetians he tempted to betray the interests of the League, by promises tending to augment their maritime superiority. The confederated powers were busily employed between themselves in similar negotiations. The king of England and cardinal Wolsey declared their dissatisfaction that the principalities promised to them as the reward of their co-operation were not situated in the duchy of Milan, instead of in the kingdom of Naples; and opened negotiations with a view to accomplish the desired exchange. The marquis of Saluzzo arrived, meantime, in Italy, leading the French reinforcements of 500 lances and 4,000 infantry, and formed a junction with the duke of Urbino at Lodi. Mutual jealousies, however, divided the chiefs of the League. The duke of Urbino —the same who had once been despoiled of his territories by Leo X. to enrich that pope's nephew, Lorenzo de Medici—had vowed implacable hatred to the Medici; an enmity ever kept alive by the imprudence of Clement VII., who caused his niece Catherine, heiress and only daughter of Lorenzo, to assume the title of duchess of Urbino. The duke refused to employ his undoubted military abilities to insure the triumph of the Medici, his hereditary foes; and consequently his delays enabled Bourbon to capture the citadel of Milan. Italy at this period presented a spectacle of most appalling division: the feuds of the Sforza and the Orsini; of the house of Saluzzo with that of Gonzaga; of the Medici with the Colonna and the Rovere—the princely chiefs of these hostile families, with the exception of the Colonna, being outwardly banded together for the defence of Italian independence—filled the country with cabals, and afforded the emperor unbounded facilities for paralyzing the operations intended to overthrow his supremacy.

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* Mém. de Martin du Bellay.

Clement, meanwhile, essayed to disarm the hostility of the Colonna by a separate treaty, to enable him to disband the garrison of Rome, and to despatch the remainder of the Papal forces to join the army under the duke of Urbino. The treaty was sworn to by Vespasian Colonna, son of Prospero, general of the former Italian League, for himself and on behalf of his two cousins, Ascanius and the cardinal Pompey Colonna. Clement, whose fears were tranquillized by this accommodation, dismissed the troops from Rome, and despatched the remainder of his forces to the confederate army. The jealousy of the lawless and ferocious chiefs of the Colonna at the ascendency of the Medici, was too intense to permit a form of words to stand between them and the satisfaction of their vengeance, did a favourable opportunity occur. Incited, therefore, by the secret support of the emperor, when Clement, unsuspicious of their perfidious designs, was totally unprepared for defence, the Colonna, at the head of a band of savage mercenaries, made a descent during the night upon Rome, captured three gates of the city, and advanced towards St. Peter's and the Vatican, overpowering resistance by fire and sword. The cardinal Pompey Colonna, in the midst of the tumult, was heard to proclaim his intention of assassinating Clement with his own hands, and of compelling the cardinals, at the dagger's point, to elect him to the pontifical throne. In the midst of the uproar, Clement was with difficulty prevailed upon by the terrified cardinals to seek refuge in the castle of St. Angelo. With courage wrought to desperation, the pope wished, surrounded by the emblems of his pontifical dignity, to confront his sanguinary assailants, as his predecessor Boniface VIII. had done the fierce Sciarra Colonna. The pope quitted the Vatican as cardinal Colonna and his myrmidons entered. The palace was soon sacked; the sacerdotal ornaments, and the vessels from the Sistine chapel and the church of St. Peter's, were seized and distributed amongst the rapacious soldiery; and the pillage continued until the cannon of St. Angelo, pouring down with murderous effect on the insurgents, arrested their progress. Don Ugo de Monçada, Imperial ambassador in Rome, then took advantage of the temporary cessation of the conflict to proceed to St. Angelo, and confer with the pope. Clement, almost beside himself with terror, hastily concluded a truce of four months with the emperor, and engaged to withdraw his troops from the army of the League, provided the Colonna were compelled to evacuate Rome. Monçada, who now held both the pope and the house of Colonna at his disposal, agreed to these terms. The Colonna, who acted only by the secret permission of the emperor, were necessitated to obey the mandate of the Imperial ambassador; and baffled and exasperated, they and their partisans quitted Rome.*

The duke de Bourbon, meanwhile, remained encamped at Milan. Reduced to the last degree of poverty, the miserable inhabitants endured in sullen despair the tortures inflicted by the Imperialists to compel them to reveal their supposed treasures. Morone, chancellor of the duke of Milan, was compelled to purchase his life by a gift of the sum of 20,000 crowns.† This money sufficed to allay the murmurs of the soldiery; who, although nominally in the pay of Charles V., never received the value of a crown from the Imperial treasury. The duke's popularity with the forces under his command was unbounded: his dauntless bearing, valour, and reckless assumption of the character of a leader of adventurers, while sharing his purse and conversing on terms of equality with the meanest soldier in his army, raised their enthusiasm to a degree that they were ready to sacrifice their lives at his bidding.* At length Bourbon led his troops from Milan, leaving Antonio de Leyva to garrison the duchy. The destination of the duke and of his fierce bands was a mystery; dread and suspense hung over the various Italian states comprehended in the League. To his troops Bourbon announced that the moment was at hand which should recompense them for the privations they had suffered, and secure to them a splendid reward.

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* Mém. de. du Bellay. Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

† Ibid. Guicciardini.

Meantime, the count de Nassau, and Fruendsberg, the outlawed German chief who had so powerfully contributed to the victory gained before Pavia, raised a large body of German adventurers, which the archduke Ferdinand, brother of the emperor, equipped, and marched to reinforce Bourbon. A vehement partisan of the reformed faith, Fruendsberg assailed with merciless cruelty all opponents professing the Romish creed. Banished by the persecution of the Church, he became its most virulent foe: his hatred of the pope and of the priesthood was so intense, that before setting out on his expedition, he provided himself with a golden chain on purpose to strangle the supreme pontiff with his own hands; "Because," said he, "to every lord due honour; and as the pope declares himself first and foremost in Christendom, one must make exceptions in his favour!"† Plunder was the object of Fruendsberg and his mercenaries. Every town was despoiled of its riches through which they passed; like a swarm of locusts they ravaged the country, leaving behind famine, pestilence, and desolation. The churches were stripped of their riches; tombs were rifled; and the sacred edifices desecrated. The duke of Urbino, and the marquis of Saluzzo, meantime, hastily raised the siege of Genoa, and marched, in the hope of preventing the junction of these troops with Bourbon. An action was fought on the road to Borgoforte; Giovanni de Medici, the gallant marquis de Marignan, was killed at the very first shot; a panic ensued, and the forces of the League were overpowered, leaving Fruendsberg to pursue his victorious progress, and join Bourbon near to Placenza.

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* "My comrades," said he, "I am a poor soldier. I do not possess a sou more than the most needy amongst you; let us seek our fortunes together." The soldiers replied—"Nous vous suivrons partout; dussiez vous nous mener à tous les diables!"—Brantôme.

† Brantôme,—Capitaines Etrangers.

The duke de Bourbon continued his march. At one time Bologna seemed menaced with destruction, then Placenza. At length the duke entered the Tuscan territory: the rich and populous city of Florence, the cradle of the Medici, recoiled in terror before his approach. During this march, the savage Fruendsberg was struck dead by a fit of apoplexy. The prince of Orange, another of the rebellious subjects of Francis, and his country's bitter foe, took the command of the German legionaries. Another few days of suspense ensued, when Bourbon's projects were revealed; his soldiery poured into the Campagna, and were soon under the walls of Rome.

The pope, meantime, had violated the truce imposed upon him by Don Ugo de Monçada, and solemnly excommunicated the Colonnas for their recent sanguinary outrage. Overwhelmed with terror at the peril which menaced the holy city, Clement again sought to avert it by concluding a hasty accommodation with the viceroy of Naples, whom he invited to take up his abode in Rome. He then sent a messenger to Bourbon to impart the news of his reconciliation with the emperor, and to offer him a voluntary contribution, which the duke rejected as insufficient. Clement then besought the viceroy to arrest the march of the army, in the emperor's name. The viceroy complied; but his authority was derided by Bourbon, and the bearer of the mandate scarcely escaped with life from the camp when the soldiers discovered his errand. De Lannoy then determined to repair in person to Bourbon's camp. The duke's hour of retaliation had arrived for the deceit practised upon him by the transfer of Francis into Spain; and the slights he had experienced at the court of Toledo. He kept the viceroy in pursuit of the army for several days, appointing various interviews, and purposely failing in all, until at length De Lannoy was compelled to retire before the advance of the duke of Urbino, and take refuge in Sienna.* The pope, in an agony of alarm, implored immediate succour from the French and the Venetians; but, notwithstanding the approach of the army of the League, Bourbon resolved on the assault of Rome.

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I. Mém. de du Bellay. Brantôme.

In this emergency Clement took the only course in his power to adopt, by retiring, with thirteen of his cardinals, into the castle of St. Angelo. The gates of the city were closed, and every possible defensive operation practised. At two o'clock in the morning of the 6th of May, 1527, the assault commenced. With his own hands Bourbon raised the first scaling ladder to the walls of Rome. The fearful judgment which he had invoked on his own head if he failed in his promise to the inhabitants of Milan, then met with literal fulfilment. The first to mount the breach, Bourbon was inciting his troops to the charge, when he was shot through the lungs by the bullet of an arquebuss fired from the city by some unknown hand.* He instantly fell; but fearful lest the catastrophe might daunt the courage of his troops, Bourbon bade an old adherent,† who was near him, to conceal his fall, and to cover him with his cloak. The command then devolved upon the prince of Orange, who had witnessed the duke's fall. The storm of the city continued with unabated fury; and at length, amid the incessant fire of the besieged, the ramparts were carried. The prince then informed the soldiery of the fall of their idolized leader. With cries of "*Carné, carné! sangré, sangré! Bourbon, Bourbon!*" the soldiers thirsting for blood and vengeance rushed upon the prostrate city.

The horrors to which the city was subjected defy description. Never even was pagan Rome so desecrated. For the space of two months the city was delivered over to rapine and violence. The churches were pillaged; and murders were committed under circumstances too horrible for description. The licentious soldiery roamed the streets perpetrating dreadful outrage. The convents were forced; and the priesthood was subject to atrocious insult. The German Lutherans were surpassed only in deeds of plunder and violence by the soldiers of Catholic Spain. Women of the most exalted rank fared no better than the wives and daughters of the humble Roman citizen. "Never before was seen such calamity, misery, damage, cruelty, and inhumanity as that committed by the German heretics; so much so that the work of slaughter proceeded without intermission for the space of fifteen days, during which period eight thousand of the Roman people were slain, whose cries, clamours, and wailings converted the city into a hell."* The palaces of the principal nobles were reduced to ashes. Many were compelled to ransom their lives by a donation of all their wealth. The priests and cardinals who had not sought timely refuge within the fortress of St. Angelo were subjected to scandalous outrage: they were paraded through the streets of Rome seated on asses, and severely beaten by the soldiery during their degrading progress. Bourbon, meanwhile, had been transported by the soldiers into the city on their first entrance. He lingered for some hours after the successful termination of the conflict, and expired in great agony. He was bewailed with frantic sorrow by the troops; and his loss hardened them against showing compassion to the unhappy Roman people. During the march, the soldiers had composed a song in honour of their general, in which they compared him to the greatest heroes of antiquity. The chorus at the end of each verse was—

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* The celebrated sculptor, Benvenuto Cellini, claims to be the person who fired the fatal shot.

† The duke's equerry, Combaud. Brantôme,—Capitaines Illustres.

"Calla, calla, Cesar, Hannibal, y Scipion,
Viva la fama de Bourbon!"

The pope, meantime, closely besieged by the prince of Orange in the fortress of St. Angelo, was soon reduced to a condition of absolute starvation. The duke of Urbino made no effectual attempt to relieve the pontiff. His resentment was gratified by his knowledge of Clement's extreme need; and that he, who had been once despoiled by the house of Medici, held the pope's fate, and the very integrity of the States of the Church, at his disposal. He created a thousand causes for delay; stopping his march upon frivolous pretences. Suddenly the banners of the League would rise over the brow of the hills bounding the horizon, in sight of the fortress of St. Angelo; then, when Clement's expectation of rescue became most intense the duke retreated to some distant city, to appear again on the morrow, ever cruelly tantalizing his enemy by fallacious hopes. Clement at length felt convinced that it was the intention of the duke of Urbino to suffer him to perish in torments the most humiliating and vindictive. He therefore hastened to capitulate; for there no longer remained within the strong towers of St. Angelo food sufficient for the sustenance of its garrison for another day. The prince of Orange received the pope's surrender in the name of the emperor; who thus, in less than the space of three years held captive two of the most potent sovereigns in Europe. The terms of Clement's capitulation were rigorous in the extreme. He consented to pay the sum of 400,000 ducats to the soldiers; to cede to the emperor the castle of St. Angelo, and the citadels of Ostia, Civita Vecchia, and Civita Castallana; the towns of Parma, Placenza, and Modena. He promised to grant absolution to the Colonnas, and to the invading hosts then holding him captive; and agreed to remain a prisoner, with his thirteen cardinals, at St. Angelo, until these conditions were performed. The carnage throughout the Roman states was then arrested, though with difficulty, by the prince of Orange, who himself had been dangerously wounded during the siege of St. Angelo. The unfortunate pontiff was then committed to the care of Alarçon, the old gaoler of Francis I.

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* Paradin,—Hist. de Notre Temps. "The tumult was so great," says Brantôme, "what with the reports of artillery, the cries of the vanquished, the groans of the wounded, the diversity of tongues, the clash of weapons, and the roar of drums, that the very thunder of Heaven would not have been heard."

It is often the subject of historical inquiry whether the emperor was privy to the atrocities committed by the Imperial army, especially in the sack of Rome and the captivity of the pope. In the case of a sovereign less addicted to habitual dissimulation, the presumptive evidence of Charles's noncomplicity would be sufficiently strong to acquit him of the charge. The Imperial army set at naught the stringent commands of the viceroy of Naples, Charles's representative in Italy, and refused to accept the treaty concluded by him with Clement. The army, moreover, though nominally termed Imperial, was for the greater part composed of irregular levies of mercenary troops, yielding obedience alone to the chieftain under whose banner they had been enrolled. The marquis del Guasto, Alarçon, and several others, retired immediately from Bourbon's army when he was on his march to Rome, on receiving the commands of the viceroy, whose orders, as the representative of the emperor, they conceived themselves bound to obey. Nevertheless, after the pillage of the holy city, the viceroy himself, accompanied by these two officers, returned to Rome to share in the spoils with the prince of Orange. The emperor, on learning the news of the imprisonment of the sovereign pontiff, displayed the greatest sympathy for his misfortune. He arrayed himself in mourning garments, and ordered public processions and prayers to obtain from Heaven the release of the pope; and the rejoicings for the nativity of a son, whom the empress Isabel had given birth to a few days previously, were postponed. These outward manifestations cannot be accepted as proofs of the sincerity of the emperor's sorrow; he displayed as much compunction, or more, when informed of the captivity of Francis I. In this instance, the scandal to Christendom was tenfold greater; it behoved the emperor therefore, as much for his reputation as for his interest, to disavow Bourbon's sacrilegious act, in so far as he could without relinquishing the political advantages to be gained thereby. The question whether Charles was accessory to these excesses, can never be solved, as it rests on the nature of the secret instructions given by the emperor to the duke de Bourbon, before he dismissed him from Spain to act as his generalissimo against the revolted duke of Milan and the confederates, of whom the pope was one, who supported Sforza in his rebellion. It seems, however, scarcely probable that Bourbon, to whom the emperor had assigned the magnificent reward of the Milanese, and whose ambitious hopes centred exclusively in Charles's favour, would have ventured to defy the authority of the viceroy, and lead his troops to dethrone the pope, unless tolerably certain of the secret countenance of his Imperial master. Placed under ban by the emperor Charles V., and pursued by the just resentment of the king of France, what territory could Bourbon hope to hold in Italy despite of these two potentates? The uncertainty which exists as to Bourbon's motives, and the impulses under which he acted, have induced some historians to believe that his conduct was the result of a secret understanding with

Francis; and that after the fall of Rome, he intended the invasion and conquest of Naples for his royal master to efface the stain of his treason, and to merit his restoration to the country he so fervently regretted. Some in their zeal to reconcile these discrepancies in Bourbon's conduct, quote a letter supposed to have been written by him to the king, in which these words occur: "Sire, Naples shall give you proof of my repentance, and excuse my fault." No proofs of any such design on the part of the fallen constable exist; while, on the contrary, we have abundant evidence of his inimical sentiments towards Francis, aggravated now to still greater hostility by the evasion of the treaty of Madrid, which had restored to Bourbon his hereditary rank and patrimony.

In France, the constable's trial for high treason had been resumed soon after the king's return; for these proceedings were suspended during his absence by the prudent policy of Madame. The parliament pronounced its final decision two months after the decease of Bourbon. The decree, which was published July 26th, 1527, erased the name of Charles de Bourbon from the genealogy of his illustrious house as one "having notoriously degenerated from the loyalty and fidelity of his ancestors of the said house of Bourbon." On the following day an officer deputed by the parliament effaced the arms, ciphers, and devices of the constable from all edifices once appertaining to him; and as a mark of infamy, the noble escutcheon of his armorial bearings over the portal of the Hôtel du Petit Bourbon in Paris, was smeared with saffron. His estates were formally confiscated; and his nephew and heir, the prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, son of his eldest sister, Louise de Bourbon, was debarred by a special decree from preferring his claims to the inheritance of his uncle's vast wealth.* The king bestowed the greater portion of the lands of Bourbon on his mother. A document to this effect was executed between the king and Madame at la Fere-sur-Oise, August 25th, 1527, in which the claims of the crown to the appanages of the deceased constable, and the pretensions of Madame as heiress of Bourbon were defined. To reward the legal chicanery displayed by the chancellor in advocating the claims of Madame, the beautiful estates of Thryerne and De Thory were bestowed upon Duprat. This great judicial act, and the evidence afforded by the operations of the marquis de Saluzzo in Italy, that Francis meditated a total infringement of the treaty of Madrid, transported the emperor with fury. Notwithstanding his mourning robes, and his emphatic disavowal of the horrors perpetrated in Rome, he treated the dauphin and his brother with cruel rigour. The poor children hitherto had been suffered to live in the fortress of Berlanga, under the care of Don Juan de Tonar, son of the constable of Castille, Velasco, duke de Frias. An intimation was given, just about this period, to the Imperial council—intelligence probably invented to serve the emperor's purpose—that a plot was in agitation to favour the escape of the young princes from Spain. Upon this pretext they were immediately separated from their French attendants, conveyed to Pedraço, and shut up in a dismal fortress. Their only room was a small chamber lighted by a window a foot and a half square; here none but Spaniards were allowed to communicate with the princes. Queen Eleanor was forbidden to approach their abode; and a favourite dwarf belonging to the dauphin, and the only playmate of the young princes for many dreary weeks, was taken from them by the express command of the emperor. Mademoiselle de Chavigny, their *gouvernante*, was detained in arrest; and many of the officers of their household, including Beauvais, the personage accused of plotting their evasion, were sent to the galleys.* This cruel severity displayed towards two innocent children of the respective ages of eight and nine,

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* Before the decease of his consort, Suzanne de Bourbon, the constable made his will. This document is dated Chantelle, A.D. 1521. In case he died childless, Bourbon bequeathed his possessions to his mother-in-law, Anne de France, duchess de Bourbon Beaujeu, with remainder to his nephew Louis, prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, the son of his eldest sister Louise. In case of the decease of Louis, Charles, the younger son of his sister, was substituted. To Renée, duchess de Lorraine, his younger sister, the constable left the sum of 100,000

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livres. The annual revenues of the constable de Bourbon amounted, it is supposed, to the sum, enormous in those days, of from 800,000 to a million of livres.

* Eloges des enfans de France, par le P. Hilarion de Coste. Mém. de du Bellay. Sandoval,—Hist. de la vida del emp. Carlos V.

is sufficient of itself to expose the hollowness of the professions of concern with which the emperor at the very time feigned to deplore the calamities of Italy, when under his own sign manual he doomed his poor little captives to such rigorous confinement.

The young princes, meanwhile, pined in their lonely prison. They missed Marguerite's endearments, and their cheerful home at Blois or Amboise. The king and Madame however frequently despatched friends to visit them. One of these ambassadors was the high treasurer, Babou de la Bourdaizière, whom the dauphin and his brother knew intimately. The duchess bids her "chers petits amis" repose all trust and confidence in what Babou may tell them from the king and herself, as if they were listening to the tones of her voice.* Francis greatly mourned the detention of his children, and repeatedly offered the Imperial envoys any sum their master pleased to name for their ransom. The duchess d'Angoulême, who was much addicted to the superstition of the age, consulted astrology as to the probable duration of the captivity of her grandchildren. One German astrologer, in particular, boldly replied to the queries of Madame, by undertaking to transport the young princes through the air from Berlanga, in the same manner as the legend relates that the prophet Habakkuk was miraculously conveyed by an angel across the fosse of Lyons.†

As soon as Madame was able to travel, Marguerite accompanied her for change of air to Fontainebleau. This palace was the favourite residence of Francis; and he lavished all that money and art could produce for its magnificent embellishment. Her residence here always proved a source of great pleasure to queen Marguerite. In a letter to Montmorency written at this period, after the departure of Madame and the king for La Fere-sur-Oise, Marguerite, whose health was too delicate to accompany them, says: "I assure you that my illness does not prevent me from visiting twice a day these beautiful gardens; for here I find myself marvellously at my ease." Madame, though she was scarcely recovered from her illness, had insisted on accompanying the king, who was about to proceed to Amiens to meet cardinal Wolsey, sent by the king of England to confer with Francis, to obtain his confirmation of their ancient treaty against the emperor, and to negotiate fresh articles of alliance. Marguerite, it appears, was left quite alone at Fontainebleau; the king of Navarre followed the court to La Fere, where the king remained for some time. "Madame has left me here," wrote Marguerite to Montmorency, "in charge of certain of her effects, that is to say, of her parrot and her jesters, which I like because they contribute to her amusement."*

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* Lettre de Madame Louise de Savoye à ses petits enfans ôtages en Espagne. MSS. de Gaignières. Bibl. du Roy. in fol. sans No. p. 60.

† Gailliard.

The object of this letter of Marguerite's to the marshal was to obtain the admission of the son of the governess of these female jesters into the royal kitchen; as Montmorency, in the exercise of his office of grand master of the household, enjoyed the exclusive patronage of all posts, from the highest to the lowest. Marguerite never refused her good offices to her humblest dependant; and the number of letters she wrote requesting appointments of the lowest kind in the households of her brother and of Madame for her poorer *protégés*, is astonishing.

During her solitary sojourn at Fontainebleau, Marguerite suffered occasionally from great depression of spirits. She was often seriously indisposed, and unable to take exercise in "those delicious gardens," which she mentions with such delight. Her separation from her brother weighed upon her mind: they were not to meet again until after her *accouchement*, and gloomy forebodings seem to have often oppressed Marguerite. She was also tormented by an incessant cough, which greatly exhausted her strength; and in several of her letters to the king, she speaks despairingly of her recovery. It is in an epistle in verse, composed about this time, and sent by Marguerite to her brother, that she unfolds to him her anxieties, and her affliction at their separation at a period when the failing health of the duchess d'Angoulême, and the urgency of political affairs, rendered her presence doubly necessary to him. She commences her letter by describing to Francis her regret that illness prevents her from rendering him devoted service;

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* MS. Bibl. Roy. F. de Béth., No. 9127.

nor could she, from the same cause, write as frequently as the desire arose. She proceeds then to recount to her brother how sorrowfully the lonely days pass at Fontainebleau. She says:—*

"Je ne vous puis au long mander ma vie,
De vous donner tel ennuy n'ay envye;
Mais s'il vous plaist sçavoir quelle je suis,
Comparaison mieulx bailler ne vous puis
Que du rochier de Cerès, dont racompte
Eurialo, qui d'asseurer n'a honte
Que par douleur la pierre fut contrainete
A recevoir de leurs larmes l'empraincte.

Ce dur chaillou, monsieur, je vous envoye
Que j'ay trouvé en ce desert sans voye,
Il suppléra à ma pouvre escripture
Vous demonstrant quelle est ma pourtraicture."

Francis hastens to send a reply, also in verse, to this epistle. He tenderly chides his sister for her melancholy presentiments, and admonishes her that, by indulging in thoughts and forebodings not shared by Madame and himself, she was disloyal to "their trinity."

"Parquoy, si l'œil de ton corps veult plourer,
Arreste-le, faisant le demourer,
En luy disant. O corps! tu n'as puissance
Rien exercer; amour t'en faict deffence.
Deux aultres sont qui, sans les offenser,
Tu ne pourroys ung triste ennuy penser:
Car la chose qui à trois est commune
Impossible est sans les deux estre à une.
Soient doncq cessez vos plainctz et vos ennuytz,
Soient convertiz en plaisans jours vos nuytcz;
Soit donné lieu et plaisante scilence
A ton regret: plus en toy n'ayt puissance
En lieu de fiers souspirs ennuyeulx,
Soit toute chose agreable à tes yeulx:
Ainsi faisant, tu donras à ta mere
Joye et plaisir, ostant douleur amere;
Et à ton frère rendras, par telle joye,
Chemin heureulx et plaisante sa voye."

The king concludes his epistle with these words, which doubtless proved consolatory to Marguerite in her depression:—

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* Docum. sur la Captivité de François I. Edited by M. Champollion Figeac.

"Mais avec ce seul mot fera conclusion
Que pour jamais sera l'affection
De mon vouloir à la tienne mesure,
Passé, present, et le futur t'asseure."

Marguerite, in her response, enthusiastically acknowledged her allegiance to that inseparable trinity of love, sentiment, and interest, which subsisted between herself, the king, and Madame. She exclaims in the opening lines of her epistle, which is written throughout with elegance and fervour :—

"Ce m'est tel bien de sentir l'amytié
Que Dieu a mise en nostre trinité,
Daignant aux deux me joindre pour tiers nombre
Qui ne suis digne a m'en estimer l'ombre ;
Que tout mon heur et ma gloire y consiste,
Et le pouvoir dont contre ennuy resiste."

Marguerite then proceeds to expostulate with her brother on the command he gave her to repose tranquilly at Fontainebleau, and to suffer nothing to disturb her mind, when she, who so well understood his anxieties, knew how much he needed her presence. She expresses herself thus :—

"Ce seul sentir de chose à moy tant chere
Me vient crier : Las ! faiz ta bonne chere !
Vouldroys-tu bien rire, voyant ton frere
N'ayant secours que de sa foible mere,
Qui sans repos, travaillant jours et nuyctz,
En surmontant la force des ennuictz,
Vont loing de toy. Et quoy que l'on te die,
Ta mère n'est quicte de malladie !
O monseigneur ! pense je te supplie,
Ceste raison dans mon cueur accomplie.
Doy-je passer mon temps sans y penser ?
Certe, nenny ; se seroit offenser
Parfaicte amour, qui sans diminuer
Je voy en toy sans fin continuer."

In another part of her poem, Marguerite thus eloquently apostrophizes her beloved brother. She was aware of the secret self-upbraidings which tormented Francis for his breach of faith to the emperor :—

'Mais toy, qui as toujours foy conservée
Et envers tous ta constance observée,
Rendant content Dieu et ta conscience
Par ta vertu, doulceur, foy, pacience,
Tenant à tous parole et verité,
Honneur tu as non ennuy merité:
Car tu ne quiers que celuy qui est tien,*
Celuy qui l'a, sçait bien qu'il n'est pas sien:
C'est ung tresor qui fait tant travailler
Filz et mère, et nuyt et jour veiller,
Qu'oncques ne fut trouvé par escripture
Pareille amour, ne si bonne nature."

Of Madame, Marguerite in the same epistle enthusiastically exclaims:—

A elle eu peur de mal, de mort, de guerre,
Comme Anchises qui delaissa sa terre?
Non: Chascun sçait que sa seure constance
De son pays fut la seulle deffence.
Pour dire vray, nous ferions une histoire
Si toy et moy avons bonne memoire,
De tous les faictz que pour nous elle a faictz,
Seulle portant, nous soullageant le faitz.
Et maintenant qu'elle est foible, et toy fort
Tu la soustiens comme son reconfort,
Non moins souffrant par ta compassion
Qu'elle endure de mal et passion."

Queen Marguerite continues, in her energetic verse, to draw a beautiful picture of the mutual aid and consolation which the king and Madame yielded to one another, which she declares "worthy of everlasting renown." She says that they fulfil towards each other "the perfect measure of love." Then suddenly reverting to her own absence from their society, she again alludes to her solitude, her misgivings, and her failing health; and emphatically exclaims, in allusion to their union:—

"Mais tout cecy me doit-il resjouir
Quant je ne puis d'un tel honneur jouir?
Est fut plus Creusa du feu Troyen punie
Que moy, qui suis d'un si grand bien banie?
Est plus la mort à craindre et estimer
Que ne servir ceulx qu'on doibt tant aymer!"

It had been mercifully ordained for Marguerite's happiness that her destiny led her not away from France. As the consort of a foreign sovereign, her life must have passed in perpetual solicitude. Her uneasiness when submitting even to a temporary and unavoidable separation from her brother was distressing to her above measure; and she solaced her impatience by ceaseless correspondence with him, both in prose and verse. Her poems and miscellaneous pieces have almost invariably Francis for their hero. His mind alone partook of the texture of her own. The deep feeling which characterizes Marguerite's writings, her graceful pleasantry and pointed wit, met with fervent response from her chivalrous and accomplished brother; but he partook not in the overflowings of her devout spirit, nor of that lowly humility which veiled the radiance of intellectual acquirements so striking and rare. Detraction never impaired Marguerite's literary fame: none were envious of one who spoke so humbly of her own powers, and yet whose mental superiority was unquestioned. Unassuming and courteous, Marguerite in the most graceful manner possible lays aside the great princess in her varied correspondence with the learned men of Europe, and prays to become their disciple; while they, grateful for her patronage, and appreciating the refinement and condescension which, when she conferred a favour, prompted her to appear herself its recipient, have extolled, without one particle of depreciation, her mental endowments.

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* Marguerite alludes to her brother's children, detained as hostages by the emperor.

The whole of the month of October was probably spent by Marguerite at Fontainebleau. The king of Navarre was actively employed on the king's service in securing to Francis promises of support amongst the various lay and ecclesiastical peers summoned to meet in Paris during the ensuing month of December. So that her husband rendered good service to the king, Marguerite was content to submit to his absence. Francis placed great confidence in the abilities of the king of Navarre. Often, with little consideration for his sister, he summoned Henry away from her. Throughout her life these perpetual separations from her husband were amongst the most bitter of the sacrifices so unhesitatingly made by Marguerite for her brother.

During Marguerite's sojourn at Fontainebleau she received a second letter from Erasmus. Absorbed by a multitude of anxieties, it appears that after her return from Spain, she had omitted to answer his first letter, which she received while at Madrid. That letter reached her in a moment of deep sorrow: its strain of elevated feeling, and, above all, the noble eulogium pronounced by the illustrious Erasmus upon her conduct, doubtless proved consoling, and afforded encouragement to one so susceptible of good as was Marguerite. His eloquent pen again sent her words of comfort in a season of affliction and gloom.

ERASMUS TO MARGUERITE, QUEEN OF NAVARRE.

"Queen! more illustrious for piety and virtue than for the lustre of your crown and lineage, I am assailed by numberless solicitations to address you; or rather I am reproached because my letters do not more frequently intrude upon your majesty. I have no pretence, no cause to address you; besides, I am oppressed with business, and am aware also that your occupations leave you little leisure to peruse useless letters, for to the epistle which I sent you some time past, at the persuasion of these same personages, I have received no written response, but only a simple verbal acknowledgment. I have been told that you have since written to me by a certain Polish gentleman, whom death arrested on his road here. I know not whether this be truth. I would desire that the prosperity of persons depended on their piety: but He who directs all things for the welfare of those whom He loves, knows what is needful to us, and when it shall seem good to Him will give a favourable termination to affairs apparently most adverse; for when human counsel is cast down, then especially is the inscrutable wisdom of God revealed. To him who thus heartily casts the anchor of his hope can no evil come, but what must redound to his eternal good. To God, therefore, we commit all things.

In that which regards yourself, it rather behoves me to render you grateful thanks for what you have already done, than to seek to stimulate you by exhortations to continue to protect letters, and the sincere friends of Christ from the persecutions of the wicked—for they already owe you much—as also to your brother, the very Christian king, and to that wise, excellent, and religious lady, your mother. May the Lord Jesus bestow every felicity upon you all. If you have any commands to signify, I am ready to obey.

Bâle, written these Ides of August, MDXXVII.*

The works of Erasmus, notwithstanding the signal protection vouchsafed him by Francis, were still undergoing the critical ordeal of the university. The Sorbonne, in obedience to the royal command, named commissioners to examine Béda's thesis against Lefèvre and Erasmus, but delayed to pronounce a decision upon it, while they hastily concluded their censure on the works of his opponents. This condemnation of the writings of Erasmus, prepared December 16th, 1527, two months after Marguerite received his letter, was not promulgated until four years afterwards;* at this time the king's favourable sentiments towards the reformers, and Erasmus in particular, rendered its suppression politic.

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* Lib. xx., ep. xii., ed. Londini, p. 971.

The successes of the marshal de Lautrec in Italy, meantime, inspired Marguerite with great content, as the news reached her amid the solitudes of Fontainebleau. Lautrec, in accordance with a treaty offensive and defensive, concluded between Francis and Henry VIII.,† entered Italy at the head of an army of 27,000 men, and after making some important conquests, laid siege to Pavia, and carried the city by assault. The news of the capture of Pavia was received with triumph throughout France. That city, the very name of which recalled reminiscences so humiliating, was prostrate, and subject to the ravages of the French soldiery; who, but for the exertion of the marshal de Lautrec, would have reduced it to ashes.

Marguerite heard of the fall of Pavia from the secretary Robertet, and from Delabarre, high-bailiff of Paris, her devoted adherent. She remarks thus upon it in a letter which she immediately wrote to congratulate the king. She also takes the opportunity to animadvert in rather exulting strains on the emperor's past deportment:—"Monseigneur, our joy has been so great at the news which we have received in detail of the capture of Pavia, that I can scarcely find language to express it. For when I recal the sorrow that place was the occasion of to Madame, and to all who love you, it appears as if God would now afford us recompense for those tears; for if M. de Lautrec thus successfully continues the campaign, the emperor will be compelled to give us that satisfaction, which without such compulsion he ought eagerly to have sought. His need is becoming so great, that if our love* did not surpass his necessity, he ought to crave from us now what we are content to ask from him. But He who witnesses that you have preferred the way of honour and courtesy above all other means at your disposal, will soon show you that His goodness is as infinite to convert your present sorrow into joy, as His power was absolute to inflict evil." The queen continues her letter by preferring an earnest request to be informed as often as possible of the health and well-being of Messieurs;† "for," says Marguerite, "besides my natural anxiety to hear of their welfare, this house of Navarre in which you have placed me is so devoted to your service and to theirs, that I esteem myself happy to know how greatly you are loved and honoured; for, believe me, they give you all their hearts."‡

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* The Colloquies of Erasmus had been separately condemned by the Sorbonne, May 26, 1526. The Faculty applied to them the following words:—"Corrumpunt bonos mores Colloquia prava."

† Francis signed two treaties with Henry VIII. The first was concluded at Hampton Court, August 8th, 1526. The second was signed at Westminster, May 27th, 1527.

Marguerite had by no means forgotten or forgiven the emperor for his obduracy, and his discourteous intents towards herself. He had foiled her diplomacy, and defeated the most fervent wish she had ever formed, which was to be the instrument of her brother's release from captivity; and if Charles had not absolutely rejected her hand, he had at any rate ungallantly omitted to demonstrate his gratitude for a proposal so unadvisedly made by Madame at a season of great political difficulty. The remembrance of her "grandes journées," when flying from Spain to escape arrest, was still vividly graven on Marguerite's mind. Neither had she forgotten the sundry methods taken by the emperor to manifest his ill-will, in a spirit of narrow-mindedness highly unbecoming to his Imperial dignity. She remembered how constantly and designedly the presence of the traitor constable de Bourbon was intruded upon herself and her brother during their sojourn in Spain. Amongst the nobles, also, who eagerly sought the office of governor of Burgundy, when its cession by the king was supposed to be certain, the emperor, on purpose to humiliate his rival, selected the prince of Orange,* though by a decree of the French council the prince had been outlawed from France. Charles, in short, had eagerly availed himself of every petty means to demonstrate his enmity: there had been no courteous generosity and nobleness of spirit displayed in his treatment of the king; and few there were who sympathized with him in his alleged wrongs, or regretted that the sordid spirit which desired to grasp all found itself disappointed when apparently most secure of its spoil.

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* The love borne towards the dauphin and his brother, captives in Spain, by the king, Madame, and Marguerite.

† The young princes in Spain.

‡ MS. Bib. Roy. F. du Suppl. Fran. No. 50.

During the course of the month of November, Marguerite despatched her physician, Jean Goinret, to the king, to give him a detailed account of her health and proceedings at Fontainebleau; for the desponding tone in which his sister often wrote alarmed Francis. In a letter written before the departure of Goinret, Marguerite said, when speaking of the future devotion which she and the king of Navarre intended to display towards her brother, "that is, if God is pleased to prolong my life, which I hope for, despite the admonition given me by my failing health; for since I have seen you, monseigneur, my cough has tormented me beyond measure, and I feel so feeble, that without being sustained by the prospect of soon seeing you again, I should despair of surviving even until All Saints' Day." Marguerite speaks much more cheerfully of her health in the letter she intrusted to Goinret: she praises greatly the wonderful effects of some medicated water which she had taken daily by the advice of the king's second physician, Noël Ramard; and she beseeches Francis to try also a remedy that she considers to be the surest means that she has yet known to prolong both life and strength."† Notwithstanding Marguerite's faith in Maître Noël's specific, the true elixir which revived her sinking spirits was probably her delight at the approaching arrival of Madame, accompanied by the little duke d'Angoulême and his two sisters. After the departure of cardinal Wolsey from Amiens, the king proceeded to Paris to hold the important Assembly of Notables, accompanied by Madame, the king of Navarre, and by Montmorency; after which the duchess was to rejoin her daughter at Fontainebleau. This assembly, summoned with extraordinary solemnity, commenced its sittings on the 16th of December, 1527. Its objects were twofold: first, to pronounce an authoritative and final decision on the question, whether, in consequence of the non-fulfilment of the treaty of Madrid, the king of France was obliged according to his solemn oath, to return again to Madrid and surrender himself the emperor's prisoner; or if the assembly decided this point in the negative, to empower the king to raise an extraordinary levy of two millions of golden crowns for the ransom of his sons. In the suite of Francis were all the princes of the blood, many cardinals and prelates, the knights of the order of St. Michael, and a multitude of noblemen and gentlemen. Madame occupied a latticed gallery to the right of the throne: she was attended by the duchess de Vendôme, and by her two principal chamberlains, the count de Nevers and Guillaume de Montmorency. The assembly consisted of the parliament of Paris, of deputies from the parliaments of Toulouse, Bordeaux, Rouen, Dijon, Grenoble, and Aix, and of the municipality of Paris.[*]

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* The prince of Orange quitted the service of Francis for that of the emperor in 1520. The cause of his defection was, that by order of the king, the apartments assigned him at Amboise during the baptism of the dauphin had been taken from him to accommodate a Polish ambassador. His estates were bestowed on the marshal de Châtillon as well as his government of Bretagne. The emperor created the prince duke of Gravina and prince of Amalfi. He was taken prisoner by Andrea Doria, in 1524, and was sent by the king to the castle of Lusignan, where he remained during the captivity of Francis I.

† MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8557.

The conference was opened by the king, who sat upon a magnificent throne, covered with blue velvet spangled with fleurs-de-lis. Francis first commanded an oath of secrecy to be administered to every member of the assembly. When this tedious ceremony was over, the king rose from his throne and eloquently recapitulated the leading events of his reign. He stated what reforms he had introduced for the benefit of his people, and reminded them that on his accession he found a deficit in the finances amounting to the sum of one million eight hundred thousand livres, with vast arrears of pay owing to the *gendarmerie*. He then related the history of his captivity, and entered into minute details of the various negotiations at Madrid and Toledo with the emperor; and with cutting sarcasm he developed the various subtle devices Charles had resorted to in order to prolong his captivity, and the emperor's despotic and fraudulent intents. He then related how he had caused an act, abdicating the crown in favour of the dauphin, to be drawn by the first president de Selve, which he signed and despatched into France by the marshal de Montmorency. Here Montmorency rose from his seat and declared that the edict had so been delivered to him, and yet remained in his possession; then unfolding the document the marshal read it aloud to the assembly.* Francis then resumed his address: he avowed that by the treaty of Madrid he had pledged his royal word to return into Spain, if within the space of four months the treaty was not executed. "But," added the king, with a sophistry unworthy of his chivalrous mind, "that word I gave knowing that it obliged me to nothing on account of my prison; and that not being a free agent I was not bound to fulfil any promise given under such circumstances,"

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[*] Godefroy. Grand Cérém. François.

Francis then explained how much money the state of the finances permitted him to contribute towards the ransom of his sons. He boldly requested the remainder as a voluntary gift from his people, if after mature deliberation their representatives declared him absolved from his promise.

The clergy replied to the king's address through the cardinal de Bourbon, that the Church would counsel him conscientiously, and aid him in every possible way. The duke de Vendôme promised the same on behalf of the high nobility, adding that they were ready to serve the king with their swords and their estates. The first president, de Selve, rose to reply on behalf of the commons, the parliament of Paris, and the municipalities consulted. De Selve, who partly ascribed the king's release from captivity to the effect produced on the emperor by his wordy orations, eagerly seized the opportunity to harangue. He thanked the king with most humble expressions of gratitude for all he had suffered in defence of the liberties of the kingdom, and for his condescension in consulting his subjects on a matter which his royal will might have decided. He lauded his heroism, patience, and fortitude during the lonely hours of his incarceration in the citadel of Madrid; he avowed his thankful delight that Francis had so wisely and discreetly committed the great question, as to whether the treaty of Madrid ought to be binding on his conscience and actions, to the decision of his loyal subjects assembled in parliament. The president rapturously applied to Francis the words used by Esdras to king Artaxerxes: "Benedictus Dominus Deus, qui dedit hanc voluntatem in cor regis."*

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France—Discours du Roi à l'Assemblée des Notables. Clairembault, vol. 39.

It was then decided that each estate should deliberate apart on the question laid before the assembly by the king, and separately communicate its decision on a given day. The suspense of Francis was great during this interval: for signal as were his injuries at the hands of the emperor, yet this violation of his solemn oath struck keen compunction into the chivalrous heart of the king. The deliberations of the States lasted four days: their decision was unanimously given; and was to the effect, that not only was the king not bound to return to Madrid, or to execute the treaty, but his duty, as their anointed sovereign lord, and king, absolutely forbad such a design without their previous sanction. The assembly also pronounced that Francis might justly and righteously levy on his subjects an extraordinary aid of two millions for the ransom of his sons, and for the other pressing necessities of the state.†

After obtaining this solemn judicial decision, Francis displayed much greater alacrity in prosecuting the war against the emperor. Conscious that his knightly honour was sullied by the implied prevarication of his plighted word, Francis shrank before the violent manifestoes issued by the emperor at all foreign courts, in which the king of France was branded as a perjurer and a deliberate falsifier of his solemn promise. Moreover, in language as unfeeling as it was unkingly, the emperor published his regret that he had not detained Francis in captivity, as the king had broken his word given on the faith of a prince, and a cavalier.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

† Ibid.

If ever excuse can be made for the deliberate violation of an engagement accepted with sacred solemnities, it must be found in the case of Francis. Four times was the treaty of Madrid presented to the king in the name of the emperor, and as many times peremptorily rejected. With unparalleled pertinacity, the emperor each time added something to his demands. Possessing an intimate knowledge of the laws and usages of the French monarchy, Charles knew that his demands could not be legally conceded by Francis. Absolute as were then the prerogatives of the king of France, when once the estates of the realm were convoked, the sovereign had called into being for the time a power superior to his own; while the emperor was well aware that without the assent of the States every surrender made by Francis of the inherent rights of the French monarchy was invalid. Twice Francis had publicly protested, in the presence of the viceroy of Naples and other of Charles's ministers, that if he were compelled, in order to regain his liberty, to make concessions injurious to the honour of the French people, or to alienate the territories of the crown, such compact he should eventually deem null and void; twice, also, did the king privately protest with circumstances of great solemnity, against the arbitrary extortions of the emperor. Charles was warned by his chancellor, and by a number of his privy councillors, that the treaty of Madrid could not be executed. He was implored to accept another convention—one, equitable, moderate, and which might be unhesitatingly agreed to by the king; but his ungenerous desire to humiliate his popular and hitherto prosperous competitor for pre-eminence in the counsels of Europe prevailed, and against his own better judgment Charles persisted in his demands. The emperor's restless distrust and vacillation after the treaty was signed, demonstrated his little reliance on its eventual execution. On his arrival in France, the king offered to fulfil every clause of the treaty, save and except that in which he had ceded Burgundy; but in exchange for the duchy he offered the emperor the sum of two millions of livres. At the same time he assured the emperor of that which Charles was well aware of, namely, that he had not the power to enforce the acceptance of the treaty of Madrid on the French nation. The king demurred not on the re-establishment of the traitor Bourbon in his vast hereditary patrimony; neither did Francis refuse to pardon the rebel prince of Orange, and restore his estates, though he possessed not a more deadly foe than the prince. To all the pacific overtures attempted by Francis after his return, the emperor returned replies of contemptuous refusal; he traduced the king in foreign courts, and his conduct towards the captive princes was rigorous in the extreme. The irritation glowing in the bosom of the king was at length converted into a frenzy of hate; and he threw himself into the contest with the ardour of one actuated by vehement revenge.

If Francis needed further encouragement to violate the treaty extorted from him by the emperor than what he received from his people, his conscience was tranquillized by the express approbation and sanction given to his contemplated measures by pope Clement VII.; and in that age, greatly as the papal prerogatives had fallen into disrepute, the Church's countenance divested the act of Francis of much of the lingering feeling of odium which must ever attach itself to the violation of a solemn pledge, however real and valid may be the reasons pleaded in extenuation.

CHAPTER II.

Continued sojourn of queen Marguerite at Fontainebleau—Lefèvre—His intercourse with Marguerite—The queen shrinks from avowing her religious opinions—Gérard Roussel—Marguerite obtains his release from prison, and permits him to retire into Béarn—She appoints him to the abbey of Clairac—Mission of the king of Navarre into the duchy of Berry—Correspondence of Madame and queen Marguerite with the king—Birth of Jeanne d'Albret—Result of the mission confided to the king of Navarre—Marguerite intercedes for the nobles of Berry—Arrest of the French ambassadors to the court of Spain—Reprisals exercised by Francis—Mission of the heralds Clarencieux and Guyenne into Spain—Their audience—Speech of the emperor—Cartels are exchanged between Francis and the emperor—Address of king Francis to Granvelle—Embarrassments of the emperor—Severe measures are adopted by the council against heresy—The Council of Sens—The Virgin of the Rue des Rosiers—Expiatory procession—Departure of the king and queen of Navarre from the court—Difficulty experienced by Marguerite in learning the language of the Béarnois—Her correspondence with her brother and with Montmorency—Arrival of the herald Bourgogne in France—Result of his interview with Francis—Cartel of the emperor—War in Italy—Charles concludes a treaty with the pope—Flight of Clement from Rome—Employments of the queen of Navarre while in Béarn—She continues her poem, "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse"—The total repression of reform is decided upon by the king—Louis de Berquin—His dispute with the Sorbonne—Francis commands his trial to be resumed—Its result—Marguerite intercedes to save Berquin's life—His sentence—Letter written by the queen to her brother—Execution of Louis de Berquin—Queen Marguerite visits the king at Blois, and afterwards proceeds to Lonray—The princess Jeanne—Marguerite's residence at St. Germain—Passion of the king for the chase—Defection of Andrea Doria—Its causes and results—Continuation of the war in

Italy—Proposals of peace are made by the pope—A treaty is concluded between Clement and the emperor—Conferences of Cambray—Entry of queen Marguerite and her mother into the town of Cambray—Interviews between Madame and the archduchess Marguerite—Correspondence of Madame with the king—Conclusion of the treaty between the king and the emperor Charles V.—Ceremonies of its ratification—Arrival of king Francis in Cambray—His interview with the ambassadors of the League.

THE king, during his sojourn in Paris, continued to maintain an active correspondence with his sister: amidst his vexatious political embarrassments, and the cares resulting from the defection of princes who ought to have been the steadfast support of his throne, Francis found consolation in her faithful sympathy.

On the closing of the Assembly, the king proposed to visit Fontainebleau. Marguerite hailed this announcement with delight; and she wrote to beseech her brother to hasten his journey, that they might meet again before her hour of peril arrived. Madame remained still in tolerable health, as did also the children of Francis. The little duke d'Angoulême was growing up a bold and beautiful boy, and seems to have been the object of Marguerite's greatest solace. Under the training of the learned and judicious Lefèvre, the young prince was making astonishing progress in knowledge. Marguerite, at this period, enjoyed unrestricted commune with Lefèvre, who accompanied his pupil to Fontainebleau. Probably then the warm friendship commenced which ever afterwards united the queen to Lefèvre. Before, Marguerite had protected the doctor of Etaples from the fury of the Sorbonnists for the principles which he professed, and out of compassionate feeling for one so oppressed; henceforth, however, he shared much of her personal regard. Could the discourse be put on record which passed between the eloquent doctor and Marguerite amid the shady avenues of Fontainebleau, great, doubtless, would be the profit and edification to be derived. Often must they have mourned together the weakness displayed by the bishop of Meaux—that star which once shone brightly amidst the hierarchy of France—but which was now fallen and obscured. Serious and impressive also, no doubt, was Lefèvre's admonition to Marguerite, to cast aside the earthly affections which prevented the more perfect avowal of her religious convictions; and from his lips she must have heard, that the dread of offending the brother she loved and reverenced could be no palliation before God for her delay in openly professing herself of the communion in which He was worshipped in purity and truth.

The devotion felt by Marguerite for Francis I. silenced the promptings of her conscience. She could not endure to give him affliction, or to rend the unity of that trinity at once the joy and pride of her life; but indirectly she vowed to serve the cause of God and of reform with all the weight of her influence at court. This compromise made by Marguerite with her conscience was fatally visited on her posterity. Her secret, yet powerful interposition ever served to keep alive the spark of reform throughout France, when, but for her, the policy of Francis I. would have doomed it to extinction; and persecuted as the reformers were during the latter part of this reign, the earnest entreaties of the queen of Navarre saved them from universal proscription. Had Marguerite, imbued with a noble courage, fearlessly avowed herself their protectress, and the partaker in their faith, many hidden supporters of the reformed church in France, emboldened by the example set them by the sister of the king, would have openly joined that communion; and, strong in numbers and in unity, the Church might have defied her enemies, and obtained toleration, if not recognition in the state. But depressed by the caution and silence observed by Marguerite, by the apostacy of Briçonnet, and by the perpetual controversies of sects, the spread of the reformation in France was uncertain. While its adherents deliberated and sought a leader, the Church of Rome, armed with her terrible decrees against heresy, interposed to check the movement. With the exception of one or two of the braver spirits, who expiated their alleged heresy at the stake, the reformers then fell back. Vainly in sorrow and incertitude they looked to the queen of Navarre, whose influence was boundless over the king; but Marguerite, who might have infused courage, unity, and a spirit of submission to the laws, in those whose opinions she shared, refrained from outward sympathy, and feared to obtain by her intercession the edict so ardently desired, granting to all liberty of conscience to be exercised in external obedience to the laws of the realm. The result was that the reformed opinions, stifled in their outward development, throve, as they only could in secret, and obtained an ascendency during the reign of Francis which prepared the catastrophes of the succeeding half century. Oppression matured their growth: and for years afterwards religious conflicts deluged the land with blood; until at length both the Valois and the Bourbon fell, ingulphed alike in the anarchy of the times.

The connection of the queen of Navarre with the celebrated theologian Gérard Roussel commenced about this period. During Lefèvre's sojourn in the city of Strasbourg, he became acquainted with Roussel, who was, like himself, a religious refugee. The warmest friendship soon united Lefèvre and Roussel; and the latter was invited to participate in the conferences holden by the direction of Marguerite to consider on the most feasible means of extending the principles of reform. Roussel soon after returned into France; probably on the cessation of the persecution which occurred during the captivity of the king, and that Marguerite caused to be suppressed by her intercession. The learning and piety of Roussel merited greater commendation than his discretion; and his oratorical displays in Paris soon attracted the searching inquisition of the Sorbonne. Roussel's heresy was proclaimed by the Faculty to be impious and most subtle; for he advocated that the holy communion should be administered in both kinds to the laity. An order of arrest was obtained, and Roussel speedily found himself transferred from the pulpit to a dungeon in the Châtelet. This event probably occurred during the summer of the year 1527, whilst Marguerite was sojourning alone at Fontainebleau. At the intercession of the queen of Navarre, Francis ordered Roussel to be set at liberty; and by Marguerite's permission he withdrew into Béarn. The gentleness and benevolent charity of Roussel's disposition recommended him to Marguerite's notice; and he eventually became one of the most prominent personages at the court of Nérac. Soon after his retreat into Béarn, Marguerite caused the abbey of Clairac* to be bestowed upon Roussel. This appointment, which gave great offence to the Romish Church, was the first benefice conferred by Marguerite on any of the adherents of reform after her marriage with the king of Navarre.

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* The abbey of Clairac was in the diocese of Agen. The community were of the order of St. Benedict.

Marguerite's time passed thus pleasantly in the society of Madame and of Lefèvre, until the commencement of the month of January, 1528. Nevertheless she desired greatly the presence of the king of Navarre, from whom she had been long separated. Henry was then employed on a mission of infinite importance to Francis. When the king sent his officers to levy the extraordinary aid granted to him in the Assembly of Notables, he found himself beset with obstacles of the most serious description. It was easier for the assembly to vote to the king the large sum of two millions of golden crowns, twelve hundred thousand of which had to be raised, than to indicate a way for its levy. The pope granted Francis four-tenths of all ecclesiastical benefices in the kingdom; and the rest of the sum voted—and by far its largest portion—it was determined to demand from the nobles as a voluntary donation on their part. Before the government had recourse to this disagreeable expedient, Duprat in vain taxed his versatile genius, and his knowledge of legal chicanery, to devise a more popular method for supplying the king's necessity. "Touching the matter of the money about which you and the king write to me," said the chancellor, in a letter to Montmorency,* "I have tried every way in the world to raise it through the banks, and from other quarters; but as soon as I mention the loan, every one drops his ears, and refuses to listen to me. I shall try again to-morrow morning what I can do." Neither was the intelligence which Montmorency received from Bourges more encouraging. "Monsieur de Brienne has not a single blank form at his disposal," wrote the archbishop; "he says, that if Madame and the king do not look better after their concerns, '*ils donneront du museau en terre.*' "† The king's necessity was positive and peremptory; and as he refused to permit any alienation of the royal domains, there remained no other resource but to assemble the nobility by dioceses, and propose to them the tax. As

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* MS. de Béth., No. 8573.

† Ibid., No. 8608.

Duprat had foreseen, the demand was unanimously rejected; and with greater tenderness for their purses than regard to their reputation as loyal subjects, a deputation of these thrifty barons proceeded to Paris, to consult a conclave of lawyers, hastily convoked, on the question, whether the nobles were responsible for the ransom of the king.* The nobles of Marguerite's duchy of Berry showed themselves especially inflexible in their refusal of the demand; as did also the nobility of Limousin. The mission of the king of Navarre, therefore, was to overcome this resistance, and to induce the nobles, by his persuasive eloquence, to yield to their sovereign's request, and to grant the subsidy.

In spite of the eager interest which Marguerite took in these events, her spirits continued much depressed. As the period of her *accouchement* approached, her dread that she should not survive, even to look upon her infant, appears to have become morbidly intense. The absence of her brother increased her melancholy; and with nervous restlessness she watched for the arrival of every courier, in the hope that he might bear tidings of the king's departure from the capital. Francis, however, was suffering from illness himself; and harassed by political events, he had been advised not to quit Paris before more propitious news reached him from the provinces. Marguerite's condition occasioned great distress to Madame, who earnestly requested her son to hasten to Fontainebleau as soon as his health permitted, but, in the meantime, to write frequently to his sister. "I entreat you, monseigneur," wrote Louisa to the king, "write such a letter to your sister, which, while it gives her present comfort, may strengthen her to bear her impending trial more courageously, in the event of your absence from her at that time. Nevertheless, continue to give her hopes of your presence; for I assure you, monseigneur, that her fear is great, and that she has not written to tell you so without good reason, as I will explain after your eagerly desired return to us."† The king, whose pain was infinite that Marguerite should implore his presence, while state affairs prevented him from flying to her side, immediately complied with his mother's request; and from the reply written by the queen, he seems to have offered, despite the critical state of his own health, and the exigencies of the government, to set out without delay for Fontainebleau. Madame, in the following letter, describes to her son Marguerite's happiness and delight while reading this letter, which was brought by the physician Goinret, whom Francis instantly despatched from attendance upon himself, to remain with his sister until after her *accouchement.* "You will readily believe, monseigneur, how very welcome to us was the arrival of Maître Jehan Goinret. He has greatly appeased the anxiety which your sister and I have felt concerning your health, for none but he could give us such satisfactory accounts. I am not surprised that your perfect cure is tedious, considering the bad weather we have. I entreat you to be patient for a few days longer, and do not commit any rash act, that you may become free from danger of relapse; for your health is dearer to us than our own lives. The long letter that you sent to your sister so comforted her heart and composed her mind, that it seems to me as if she had suddenly acquired double courage. She read your letter twice through in my presence, with tears in her eyes. I beg you, monseigneur, to send somebody to visit her from you about Sunday next, as I think this will be near the period when to hear of you will be of more service to her than all the medicines and remedies we can devise, as I well know the virtue and power your words exercise over her mind, as they do, also, over that of your *très humble et bonne mère et subjecte*—LOYSE."* Before her *accouchement*, Marguerite answered her brother's letter thus:—

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* The advocates employed were men who rose to the highest dignities in the state. The report of the consultation is signed by Lizet, N. Chartier, De Montholon, Aillegret, Poyet, and Charmolue.

† MS. Bib. Roy.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO FRANCIS I.†

"Monseigneur,—The honour which you have conferred upon me, by writing such a letter as the one I have just received, is such that I cannot sufficiently esteem it; for it has given me delight so infinite, that, despite the illness I have been suffering from since I saw you,

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* MS. Bib. Roy.

† MS. Bib. Roy., F. Suppl. Fran., No. 41.

I cannot now refrain from feeling good hope of regaining the health which I imagined had fled for ever. I believe, monseigneur, that your goodness appreciated my great necessity; for you could not have devised a better remedy for my relief than that afforded by a knowledge of your continued remembrance and favour. I assure you, monseigneur, that the fear I feel at the result of my approaching trial—which I dread as much as for many reasons I earnestly desire it—is almost converted into certain hope, seeing my sorrow so affects you, that to relieve it you would even sacrifice the health so dear to me, and in comparison of which I esteem my life as nothing;—nor can I endure pain so great as that which would befal me did any harm happen to you. I hope, nevertheless, that God will permit me to see you before my hour arrives: but if this happiness is not to be mine I will cause your letter to be read to me, instead of the life of Saint Marguerite,* as being written by your hand, it will not fail to inspire me with courage: I cannot, however, believe that my child will presume to be born without your command; to the last, therefore, I shall eagerly expect your much-desired arrival.

"Your very humble and very obedient sister and subject,

"MARGUERITE."

On Tuesday, January 7th, the queen of Navarre gave birth to a princess, the renowned Jeanne d'Albret, afterwards so famous for the signal protection which she bestowed upon reform. Marguerite had several times predicted that a daughter would be born to her; and her delight at her infant's birth appears to have been without alloy, except that the continued absence of the king of Navarre afflicted her. It is a remarkable fact that Lefèvre should have been at Fontainebleau at the period of Marguerite's *accouchement*, and one of the first to welcome the young princess into the world, whose future career was so signally to influence the cause of reform.

It is not very certain whether Marguerite's earnest desire was gratified by the arrival of her brother before the birth of her daughter. The probabilities are, that Francis did not visit Fontainebleau until the summer of the year 1528.

Notwithstanding her misgivings, Marguerite's recovery from her *accouchement* was favourable and rapid; and in the space of a few days afterwards, we find her busily employed in dictating letters on her brother's affairs, addressed to Montmorency and others. The little princess was a lively and beautiful child; and before she was a year old, began to give indications of that superabundance of energy for which she was afterwards so celebrated. Madame de Silly,[*] one of Marguerite's most favoured ladies, was appointed *gouvernante* to the young princess. This lady, by her tact and ability, rendered great services to the king during his captivity in Spain, where she accompanied her royal mistress; and probably the post conferred upon her was given in recognition of her fidelity at that critical period.

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* This saint was considered the especial patroness of pregnant women.

The refusal of her nobles of Berry to contribute towards the ransom of the dauphin and his brother, had proved a serious source of annoyance to queen Marguerite. It gave her great satisfaction, therefore, to hear that, mollified by the expostulations of the king of Navarre, they had unanimously granted the king a levy of a tenth on their fiefs and estates held in tenure from the crown. This good news the king of Navarre imparted to Francis in a letter dated from Bourges, in which town he was sojourning at the time of his daughter's birth. "Monseigneur," wrote Henry to the king,[†] "I found the majority of the gentlemen and nobles of this duchy of Berry assembled at Bourges to meet me, according as I had written to them to do. After I had represented—according to your commandment—what appeared to me to be their duty, with acclamation they unanimously voted to you, without prejudice, however, to their privileges of noblesse, a tenth on all their fiefs and dependencies, payable during the ensuing month of March. In accordance with this resolution, they very humbly request you to despatch to them letters acknowledging the condition on which this subsidy is granted—respecting which they have demeaned themselves with such loyal courtesy, that it is easy to perceive that their first answer was given inadvertently, and not for want of good-will to obey and serve you in all things. I humbly beseech you, monseigneur, to deign to believe this, and always to esteem them good and loyal subjects, who would neither withhold from you their lives nor their estates, if by either they could render you service."

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[*] Aymée de la Fayette, widow of François de Silly, seigneur de Lonray et de Fay, gentleman of the chamber to the king, bailiff and captain of Caen, deceased in 1524.

[†] The letter written by the king of Navarre is dated January 9th. MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8562.

Not content with the excuse offered by her husband for the nobles of Berry, Marguerite thought that it became her as their duchess to intercede with the king to pardon their former uncourteous refusal of aid; and also to pray that their privileges might be rendered inviolate by the prompt issue of letters under the great seal, stating explicitly that the grant just conceded was a voluntary and extraordinary one. Marguerite was well aware of Duprat's dexterous finesse in availing himself of any device for raising funds in an emergency; and doubtless she wished to guard her duchy from future liability to be mulcted at the chancellor's pleasure. Marguerite's letter is addressed to Montmorency: she says:—" Despite your many anxieties, I cannot refrain from adding to your trouble by requesting you to present to the king the letters I have sent from the king of Navarre and myself, that we may be further informed of his will; for our sole desire is to obey. The king of Navarre is now in Limousin; but I have as yet only heard of his proceedings in Berry, where the nobles, having better understood the king's intentions, felt great sorrow for what they had before ignorantly done, and immediately granted the king's demands. I beseech you, speak to the king on this matter, and entreat him, out of the love which he bears towards the king of Navarre and myself, to pardon them their fault, and to command that letters may be despatched, to assure the nobles that what they have conceded shall not prejudice their rights, as he has been pleased to do to other provinces."*

The king was too glad to gather this large subsidy into his coffers to manifest inexorable resentment at the refusals he at first encountered. The sum presented to the king by his nobles, lay and ecclesiastical, was not, however, applied for the ransom of the dauphin and his brother; for the emperor peremptorily refused to accept other terms of peace than those stipulated in the treaty of Madrid. Charles's indignation became excessive when he was informed of the march of Lautrec into Italy; and with a hastiness of conduct of which he was seldom guilty, he banished the bishop of Tarbes, ambassador extraordinary of Francis, and the president de Calvimont,* the resident French ambassador at Toledo, twenty leagues from court, and committed them to the custody of guards. He treated in the same manner the ambassadors of all the confederated powers. Francis retaliated by commanding the arrest of Granvelle,† the emperor's ambassador in Paris. Charles soon became sensible of the error he had committed: the ambassadors were released, and afterwards instantly quitted Spain, in obedience to orders from their respective courts, transmitted during the period of their arrest. The release of the ambassadors, nevertheless, was not effected until after the arrival of the English and French heralds, Clarencieux and Guyenne, with a formal declaration of war on the part of their respective sovereigns. Charles received the heralds with great state, seated on his throne, and surrounded by his ministers and nobles. In reply to the address of the French herald, Guyenne, the emperor's language was calculated to inflame the hostility of the king of France. "I am surprised," said he, "that your master should think it necessary formally to proclaim a war which has been ceaseless between us for the last seven years. This proceeding would be irregular if your master were free; but it amounts to insolent temerity under present circumstances, as he is my captive, having given me his word of honour to return if the treaty of Madrid was not executed. I cannot believe, however, that this hero so jealous of his glory—this cavalier who considers the maxims of honour as sacred and inviolable, wishes to evade the proposal which I made two years ago at Grenada to Calvimont, his ambassador. However, whether this ambassador chose to be silent, or your master is pleased to feign ignorance, I charge you expressly to repeat my words to him—it is the duty of your office; and on this condition alone you enjoy immunity at my court!"‡ The herald Guyenne, on the termination of the audience, was furnished with his passports and conducted to the frontier.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8562.

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* First president of the parliament of Bordeaux.

† Nicholas Perrenot de Granvelle, Seigneur de Granvelle, afterwards chancellor to Charles V. He was father of the celebrated cardinal de Granvelle.

‡ Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

The sarcastic severity of Charles's language transported Francis with fury, and without delay he despatched a messenger to Calvimont, with orders for the ambassador to transmit a literal transcript of the emperor's mysterious words spoken when at Grenada. Calvimont had not the slightest recollection of the circumstance. He addressed a respectful letter to the emperor, requesting him to repeat the language he used at Grenada, as the king his master menaced him with disgrace unless he transmitted a satisfactory explanation within a given time. Charles replied, "he had told the ambassador, that Francis had basely, and in a most cowardly manner, violated his word; and that if the king ventured to deny it he would maintain the truth of his charge to his teeth and with his sword; for that while Christendom was threatened by the Infidels, it was unbecoming for kings to shed the blood of their subjects for other causes than in defence of religion, and therefore he was ready to settle this, their quarrel, by personal combat." From these words, used probably partly in bravado by the emperor, sprang that strange episode in the history of these eventful times, of the challenge to mortal combat exchanged between the two most powerful monarchs of Europe. The preliminaries were conducted with the solemn ceremonies usual in the middle ages, when princely foes defied each other. Heralds, with their blazoned tabards and wands, carried the challenges, and delivered them to the respective sovereigns, who granted them audiences surrounded by the pomp of royalty. The design of the actual personal encounter of the two monarchs was, nevertheless, felt to be impracticable: the solemn missions of the heralds, Guyenne and Bourgogne, therefore, could have no other result than to dazzle the multitude, and to afford a channel for the recriminations of the hostile sovereigns.

Francis, nevertheless, was not less disposed than the emperor to invest the affair with the solemnity of a state negotiation. On the 28th of March, 1528, the king, accompanied by the king of Navarre, and by the princes and foreign ministers, granted a formal audience of leave to Granvelle the Imperial ambassador, who had been released from the Châtelet when news was received of the safe arrival of the French ambassadors on the frontier.* Whatever may have been the faults and failings of king Francis, he never deviated from the refinement and courtesy of the perfect gentleman. Instead of imitating the rude and harsh language with which the emperor dismissed the French ambassadors whom he had imprisoned, Francis, though he had exercised reprisals on the person of Granvelle, addressed him thus: "Monsieur l'ambassadeur, it grieves me that I have been constrained to treat you less courteously and honourably than your services, and the many good offices you have rendered me whilst resident at my court, merit. I wish to assure you, that you have always acquitted yourself here with honour to your master, and to the perfect contentment of all men; and I doubt not that the fault does not rest with you, that affairs have not taken a more favourable turn. But when I received intelligence that the emperor your master had commanded the arrest of my ambassadors, against all laws human and divine, and also of the envoys of the League, it seemed to me that in fulfilment of the duty which I owed to my said ambassadors so unjustly detained, I could not avoid following your master's example, although I had not the least wish to injure you. I doubt not, M. l'ambassadeur, that the emperor your master will recompense you for the annoyance which you have suffered on his behalf; and I, for my part, promise and assure you that if I can serve or pleasure you in any matter, I will perform with all my heart whatever request you may make!" The king then continued in a long address to answer the emperor's speech to the herald Guyenne, and discoursed at length on each paragraph. He denied that he had ever personally given his word of honour to the emperor; "although when I was sick unto death at Madrid, and surrounded by four or five hundred soldiers, it would have been easy to extort such promise, although little to the honour of any prince who had so done." In the presence of the numerous assembly, Francis then stated explicitly, that he considered the treaty of Madrid null and void; "for," said the king emphatically, "*prisonnier gardé n'est tenu à nulle foy, n'y*

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* Mém. de Martin du Bellay.

ne se peut obliger à rien." The king then delivered his challenge to the emperor to Granvelle, after he had caused the document to be read aloud to the assembly by Robertet,* and desired him to give it to his master. Granvelle excused himself, on the plea that having received his letters of recal he had no authority to undertake the commission. Francis then proceeded to comment on the outrages recently committed in Rome by the Imperial army. The king evidently disbelieved Charles's disavowal of participation in the dreadful massacres perpetrated in Italy: "As respects the excuse that your master makes relative to the capture and imprisonment, against all right, of our holy father, God's vicar and lieutenant on earth—a personage eminently sacred and inviolable—I am astonished how words evidently of so little veracity can be paraded by him; for how can it be believed that your master has not been a onsenting party to the outrage committed on the person f our holy father, seeing that the captivity of his oliness has been long; and that instead of chastising those uilty (as he says, against his command) of an act so nchristian and execrable, he permits them to negotiate a ansom with his holiness, compelling the pope to pay way his treasures, and even to sell church benefices!—a hing not only dishonouring to God and the Holy Church, out fraught with dangers incalculable, considering the heresies which everywhere prevail." Francis vindicated himself next from the charge preferred by the emperor, that he was wanting in paternal affection, in suffering his children to remain in captivity. He recapitulated the offers he had made the emperor, and dwelt especially on the largeness of the sum of two millions of golden crowns, which he had offered for their ransom; "which," said the king, "is so great and infinite a sum of money, that it vindicates my intentions in the sight of all reasonable men, and also demonstrates, that if my future intentions were hostile to the emperor, I should not impoverish my realm to such an amount." The ambassador, who declined to reply to the king's address, excusing himself again on his want of instructions, was then courteously dismissed. The king despatched the herald Guyenne into Spain to present his cartel to the emperor.*

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* One of the secretaries of state.

The animosity of the French, nevertheless, was the source but of a small portion of the anxieties which preyed on the mind of the emperor Charles V. The ruler of an empire vast as that of Charlemagne, his ambition was gratified by the almost universal homage of the Continental nations. But the sixteenth century was the era of *renaissance;* throughout Europe the fetters of despotism were falling. A great political and religious reaction was in progress; and the thirst for freedom, so long arbitrarily repressed, manifested itself in acts of lawless aggression and defiance of constituted authority. War, tumult, faction, and infidelity, are the prominent features of the age; and during the reign of Charles V. and Francis I., the greatest potentates of the continent, this social convulsion continued. The people exulting in, though not yet confirmed in their newly acquired liberties, gave a loose rein to the most terrible excesses; so that Europe presented the spectacle of constant, fierce, popular outbreaks, and the bloody repression of tumult on the part of its various sovereigns. Amongst the diversity of races gathered under Charles's imperial sceptre, the only people upon whose fidelity he could rely, and against whom he never drew his avenging sword, were the inhabitants of Franche-Comté. Proud of owing allegiance to the royal house of Burgundy, the loyal devotion of these hardy mountaineers was without reproach. In Spain the revolutionary spirit displayed by the *communeros,* and the encroachments of the hidalgos, gave Charles perpetual care. The powerful and haughty Spanish nobles exercised then an authority and influence little short of that possessed by the great barons of France before the reign of Louis XI.; and the principles which animated the chiefs of the Santa Junta—the formidable league that threatened to dethrone the heir and grandson of Isabel the Catholic—were not extirpated from the soil of Castille. To counteract these democratic principles, the epidemic of the age, and from which even loyal and aristocratic Spain was not exempt, Charles conferred vast privileges upon the municipalities of his kingdom; and to propitiate the nobles, he constituted that brilliant court of *ricos-hombres*, grandees of Spain of the first class, upon whom he bestowed splendid privileges and honours. In the Low Countries the spirit of sedition needed constant repression; the turbulent burghers of Ghent, Bruges, and Liège, the merchant-princes of Europe fought for their privileges, and defied their princes. Proscriptions, executions, and the sword often and often again decimated their flourishing cities; but the citizens yet rose to arms to defend their commerce, or to repel the fiscal exactions of their rulers. Germany was a focus of revolt, democracy, and calamity. The states were at variance one with the other; reform agitated all minds, kindling dissension between the authorities of the cities and their inhabitants; between individuals and their relatives; and plunging the ministers of the Reformed Church into controversy with the Roman Catholic priesthood, embittering every social relation. Upon this mass of political and religious disorganization Soliman II. poured his hordes of Infidels, making war alike on all who opposed themselves to the conquests and the creed of the Mussulmans. Enough had Charles alone, in this one division of his vast empire, to exhaust the faculties of a legislator of much more comprehensive genius than himself. In addition to these weighty cares, the emperor had to legislate for his vast colonial empire, often also on the point of revolt, which he governed through viceroys, amenable to his Imperial authority, and instructed to enforce no edict of importance unsanctioned by the Cortés of Spain, and his own sign-manual. Overwhelmed by cares of such magnitude, well might the spirit of the emperor become morose; and the solitude and comparative freedom from anxiety in which he ended his days, be regarded as a boon by a mind worn by the unparalleled labours of the past. No human legislator, however, could restore the equilibrium of Europe; the preaching of Luther aroused a spirit of fearless inquiry. Men became sensible of their religious and political freedom, and responsibility; so that a system which embodied and realized the past yearning of every bosom for social reform, met with all but universal acceptance.

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* Mém. de Martin du Bellay.

During the few months of comparative tranquillity which ensued in France after the king had despatched his cartel to the emperor, the activity of the opponents of reform revived. To the great grief of Marguerite, her brother showed himself far less favourable to toleration. The relation given him by Madame of the dissensions raised during her regency by the preaching of the reformers; and the desire of Francis that his zeal for the Romish Church should present a contrast to the conduct of the emperor, who had laid sacrilegious hands on the pope, rendered him indisposed to favour his Lutheran subjects. Duprat therefore convoked a diocesan synod of the clergy of his archiepiscopal see of Sens, to meet in Paris during the month of February, 1528. An adept in duplicity, and in the arts of *chicane*, this cardinal chancellor had nothing of the churchman about him; he persecuted not out of zeal for the purity of the faith, but in arrogant indignation that any in the realm presumed to hold opinions which he condemned.

The council was attended by six suffragan bishops of the diocese, and by the proxy of a seventh. It sat during the summer months,* and enacted several severe decrees against reform. Amongst others was the following, which breathed the spirit of a persecutor unrelenting as St. Dominic himself: "Relapsed heretics shall be delivered over without form or trial to the secular arm; even should they become penitent, still they shall be punished by temporal pains; but let the Church in such case open to them her arms." The council condemned the proposition, "That as God willed not the destruction of heretics, it was therefore better that they should be converted, or left to await their doom from the lips of the Sovereign Judge." The council finally conjured *le roy très Chretièn par les entrailles de la misericorde divine* to exterminate heresy from the realm.† Well might Marguerite tremble for her faith in the face of such decrees given under the presidency of the cardinal Duprat.

During the session of the council, a circumstance occurred which increased the fiery zeal of the bigots whose counsels unhappily predominated at court. At the angle of the Rue des Rosiers, and the Rue des Juifs, in the Quartier St. Antoine, was an image of the Virgin Mary. One morning the inhabitants of the district were horrified at discovering that during the night some miscreant had stabbed the miraculous image with a poniard. The affair created the greatest scandal and excitement, and most rigorous measures were adopted, without effect, to discover the author of the outrage. Solemn processions and prayers were commanded to expiate the sacrilegious deed; and the king caused a statue of the Virgin to be wrought in silver, to replace the one so impiously defaced. Transported with a fever of religious zeal, Francis resolved to proceed, attended by his court, to re-establish the image in its niche. Accordingly on the 11th day of June, 1528, the king went in state to hear mass in the church of the convent of St. Catherine, attended by the princes of the blood, the great officers of the crown, the ambassadors, the suffragan bishops of the diocese, the municipality of Paris, the chapters of the cathedral churches, the university, and the monks of the capital. Mass was said by the bishop of Paris;* and at its conclusion the king, carrying a blazing torch, and followed by this imposing assemblage of prelates and nobles, proceeded on foot to the Rue des Rosiers. The bishop of Lisieux,† grand almoner of France, attired in his sacerdotal vestments, preceded the king, bearing aloft the silver statue. Francis with his own hands replaced the Virgin in her niche; he afterwards caused a strong trellis of iron-work to be placed before the statue to guard it from similar desecration.‡ This affair sounded the tocsin for a general persecution of the reformers throughout France. Edicts were launched by the council, and eagerly registered by the parliament, prohibiting the public meetings or "*prêches*," as they were then termed, of the Huguenots; their books were rigidly scrutinized by the theologians of Paris, and suppressed; and though for some months after the adventure of the Virgin of the Rue des Rosiers there were no public executions for heresy, yet those suspected of defection from the Church of Rome, were subjected to irksome *surveillance*.

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* The council sat in the convent of the Augustinian monks, Quartier St. André.

† Gailliard,—Hist. de François I. Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

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* Paris was then a see under the jurisdiction of the archbishop of Sens, at that time the cardinal Duprat.

† Jean Le Veneur, created a cardinal when the pope visited France in 1533.

‡ This precious statue was stolen during the reign of Francis. It was replaced by one of wood. The Huguenots hewed this image in pieces during the year 1551, when the vacant niche was again filled by a marble figure of the Virgin, which was installed by the bishop of Paris with great ceremony.

It was during the autumn of this year that Marguerite, sad, and foreseeing the calamities about to overwhelm her friends, resolved to quit the court for a season, and accompany her husband into his hereditary dominions of Béarn. The queen probably commenced her journey in the month of September, or at the beginning of October. The season, nevertheless, was unpropitious for a long journey; as sickness, infection, and famine pervaded the kingdom. The elements themselves partook in the universal disorganization of all things. The months of January and February had been so oppressively warm, that the trees budded and expanded into leaf, and the fruit formed to wither before it attained to maturity. The corn broke into ear before the usual harvest season; but the sun possessed not sufficient fervour to ripen the crops. For five consecutive years this weather continued; and during this period, a slight frost lasting two days was only seen in France. The ground swarmed with insects, which devoured every species of vegetation; and the most terrible famine ensued, followed by a fatal epidemic. Such was the scarcity of provisions, that in many provinces the sole sustenance of the peasant was a cake, composed of fern-leaves, acorns, and beech-masts.*

On the 26th of October, Marguerite wrote to her brother and to Montmorency from Gabarret, a small town only a day's journey from Nérac, where the king of Navarre intended to sojourn. Marguerite despatched the viscount Adrien, secretary to the king of Navarre, as her messenger, whom, she tells Montmorency, she could not suffer to depart without making him the bearer of a letter, "To give you news of my *ménage*, which proceeds so well that I have every reason to congratulate

* Paradin,—Hist. de Notre Temps.

myself." This avowal of happiness and content in her marriage with the king of Navarre is important to be noted in Marguerite's history; throughout the varied vicissitudes which befel her she found refuge from sorrow in her domestic circle. Probably had Marguerite, in the affair of her second marriage, yielded total submission to her brother's will, Francis would eventually have placed his beloved sister on one of the first thrones in Europe; she had preferred, however, rather to bestow her hand upon a prince whose merit she appreciated, than by a *mariage de convenance* to endanger her happiness and to quit France.

The queen of Navarre wrote again to her brother soon after her arrival at Pau. The idiom of the country greatly perplexed Marguerite, and prevented her from responding as warmly as she wished to the enthusiastic welcome which the brave Béarnois gave to their queen. "Monseigneur,—It is only five days ago since I arrived here, and I am now just beginning to understand the language. Therefore I shall leave the king of Navarre to render you account of the condition of your frontier, whom you have intrusted with its defence. He will not fail to use good diligence in your service; for, since the king's arrival here, he has alone occupied himself with your affairs, leaving to me the sole conduct of his own; which, however, cannot prosper, monseigneur, without your loving favour, to which, as humbly as is possible, he commends your very humble and very obedient sister and *mignonne*, MARGUERITE." The union subsisting between the king and queen of Navarre must have been cordial indeed, when Marguerite consents to be commended by her husband to the favour of Francis. In many of her letters, Marguerite's anxious desire that Francis should appreciate her husband is perceptible; wherever she can, she invariably unites his name with her own, that Henry may be a sharer with herself in her brother's confidence.

During the sojourn of the queen of Navarre in Béarn, the herald Bourgogne arrived in Paris, the bearer of the emperor's reply to the challenge sent him by Francis. The French herald found the emperor sojourning at Monçon, in Arragon. In the presence of the assembled court, Guyenne presented his master's cartel, saying: "Sire, if your answer contains an assurance fixing the place of combat, I have orders to receive it; if, however, it treats of other matters, my master has expressly forbidden me to take charge of it." "Your master," replied Charles indignantly, "has no right to prescribe laws in my kingdom. You may depart; my herald-at-arms shall convey my response."* The Spanish herald arrived at Fuenterrabia, on the last day of June. He was detained some time on the frontiers on various pretexts; but chiefly because Francis understood that—contrary to his express declaration to the emperor, stating he would receive no other communication than the cartel itself—Bourgogne was the bearer of a long written explanation, which he was commanded to read to the king. The documents sent by the emperor were three in number—the cartel; his reply to the king's oration to Granvelle; and an extract from the treaty of Madrid. The herald was at last permitted to enter France; he arrived at Estampes, September the 7th, where Guyenne met him. The king was hunting in the neighbourhood of Montfort l'Amaury; but on learning the arrival of Bourgogne, he returned to Paris to grant him audience. The progress of the herald through France had been interrupted by angry disputes with the authorities appointed to conduct him to Paris. On his arrival in the capital, Guyenne, by command of the grand master de Montmorency, expostulated with the Spanish herald on his design of parading the streets of Paris, arrayed in his tabard, blazoning the arms of Burgundy. Guyenne assured the herald that he could not answer for his safety if he were daring enough to present himself in such guise before the populace of Paris. Bourgogne, however, was inflexibly resolved to wear the obnoxious tabard; and, at last, the king, weary of contests so frivolous, consented to receive him thus arrayed. A guard of archers was assigned the herald for his protection from insult, which was commanded never to lose sight of him during his sojourn in Paris.†

It became now a question for the serious consideration of the French cabinet, how the emperor's acceptance of the challenge was to be treated. On all sides the duel was declared impracticable. The first hostile message had been formally conveyed, on the part of Francis, by the herald Guyenne; though Charles suggested the project in his letter to Calvimont. Both princes had proclaimed their gallant readiness to combat; how then could the affair be compromised without impeaching the knightly honour of one of the monarchs by a tardy refusal of the encounter? It had fallen to Francis to devise the expedient; as Charles perhaps unexpectedly had responded by an unequivocal acceptance of the combat. In one circumstance alone had he deviated from the formula prescribed by the king—by forwarding with his cartel an explanatory despatch, filled with angry and reproachful language, which the herald was commanded to read. This pretext was seized by Francis to put an end to an affair which kindled the curiosity and ridicule of Europe.

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

† Ibid.

On the 10th of September the herald Bourgogne was conducted in state to the Palais, where Francis received him seated on his throne, and surrounded by his princes, prelates, and great officers of state. As soon as the herald entered the hall, and before he had performed the requisite number of salutes, the king exclaimed: "Herald, do you bring letters fixing the place of combat?" "Sire," replied Bourgogne, "permit me to discharge the duties of my office, and to deliver formally the message which the emperor has confided to me." "No," exclaimed Francis, "I will not give you hearing until you show me letters patent signed by the emperor, fixing the place of combat." Bourgogne then unfolded the document he carried, and commenced reading an extract from the treaty of Madrid, according to his instructions. He had scarcely pronounced the words at its commencement: "*Sire, la très sacrée majesté de l'empereur,*" than Francis, with a gesture peremptorily imposed silence, saying: "I command that you give me the letters patent signed by your master, and afterwards you may harangue as much as you please." "Sire," replied the Spanish herald, with immoveable self-possession, "my orders are to read aloud the cartel and the extract, and then to deliver them both to you." Francis and his counsel had relied on the inflexibility of the herald to not transgress his orders. "What!" responded the king angrily, "does your master presume to dictate laws to me in my own kingdom? What may we not expect after this new instance of his hypocrisy?"* "My master, sire," retorted Bourgogne courageously, "always demeans himself like a high-minded and virtuous prince!" "Ah, ah! would that we could believe so!" rejoined the king, with significant emphasis. Montmorency then interposed; but Francis, who acted his part to perfection, checked the marshal with the words: "No! I will not suffer him to utter a word in my presence until he has complied with my demand;" then turning to the herald, he exclaimed: "Give me your cartel, or depart as you came."† The herald then advanced, and inclining low before the king, replied, "Without your permission I cannot discharge my office; deign to accord it. If you will not do so, sire, give me that refusal in writing, and command that my safe conduct to return into Spain be given me?" "Let such be done," replied Francis, addressing his secretary of state, Bayard. The king then descended from his throne, and entered the council-chamber, while the herald was conducted back to his lodging with the same ceremonies as he was escorted to the palace. Bourgogne solicited the following day audience again of the king. Montmorency was commissioned to refuse the request.

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* This narrative is taken from the relation of the audience written by the herald Bourgogne. The procès-verbal, drawn up by the French secretary of state, Bayard, gives a much more courteous tone to this celebrated interview. Francis there, instead of offering so public an affront to the emperor as that contained in the above speech, is represented to have said: "Show me the letters fixing the place of combat; for I believe the elect emperor is a prince too courteous and noble, or ought to be so, to be guilty of the great hypocrisy of sending you without, seeing that your passport was demanded and granted on this condition"—words far more consistent with the character of Francis.

† In the French procès-verbal of this interview, the words recorded as having been used by Francis, are the following:—"Your master cannot prescribe laws to me in my own kingdom; besides, affairs have reached a point that there is no further use for words. You must be aware that I did not send messages by my herald to your master; but what I sent was in writing, signed by my own hand. I needed no response, except that our field of combat should be fixed, and on this understanding alone I consented to give you audience. You might say to me things which afterwards your master would disavow; besides, I have nothing to treat of with you, but only with the elect emperor have I to deal."

"The king," said the grand-master, "considers your errand accomplished; and he permits you to depart." The herald then protested that he was ready to present the cartel to the king, whenever he was permitted so to do, provided he were suffered to fulfil the whole of his mission; and that, moreover, the emperor's reply contained the *sûrété de camp,* so imperiously demanded by Francis. Nevertheless, Bourgogne's passports were sent to him; and he quitted Paris on the 16th of September, without having delivered any of the documents intrusted to him. In passing through Bayonne, Saint Bonnet, governor of the town, inquired how it had fared with him on his journey to the capital. "I have not been maltreated," replied Bourgogne; "but they would not listen to me." "I surmised as much; I could have predicted the result of your mission," rejoined the governor.

In the cartel so unceremoniously rejected by the king, Charles proposed that their combat should take place on the banks of the river Bidassoa,* "a place which must needs be well known to you," wrote the emperor, for there I restored you to freedom, and received your children as hostages, on the faith of your solemn promise to return, if our treaty was not executed."† The emperor then proceeds to comment on the assertion made by Francis, that, "*prisonnier gardé n'est tenu a nulle foy, n'y ne se peut obliger à rien.*" Charles's arguments on the question are neither very lucid nor convincing; and he solves the whole by retorting the language of the cartel sent him by Francis, and by maintaining that the king acted "laschement et meschemment, de non avoir gardé la foy, et promesse que j'ay de vous selon ledit traité de Madrid."

While the two monarchs indulged thus in mutual recrimination, the war in Italy was vigorously carried on by their respective generals. On the news of the fall of Alexandria and Pavia, the emperor opened negotiations with Clement VII., who still remained a captive in the castle of St. Angelo. Charles felt the importance it would give the king of France in the eyes of Europe to become the deliverer of the pope; and too politic to allow his rival so manifest an advantage, he sent express directions to Don Ugo de Monçada, viceroy of Naples,* to conclude a treaty. Clement and his cardinals were reduced to the last straits; and a dreadful plague raged amongst the adherents of the pope, who had taken refuge with him in the fortress of St. Angelo. His personal friends and attendants were gradually falling victims to the malady; and such was the consternation of the pontiff, that like Francis I. in the Alcazar of Madrid, he was ready to promise anything to obtain his liberty.

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* Charles requested the celebrated Castiglione, the author of "Il Cortegiano," to be one of his seconds in the proposed duel with the king of France. The emperor sent him a fac-simile of the treaty of Madrid, to convince Castiglione that he had right and justice on his side.

† Cartel de Charles Quint à François I.

Clement, nevertheless, had not spent his hours of captivity in useless lamentation. Endowed eminently with that suppleness of character which enabled the Medici to rise from the rank of citizens to become the lords paramount of Florence, Clement acted dexterously upon the maxim, more or less that of every individual of his race—"*il faut diviser pour regner*;" so much so that Monçada began to feel serious uneasiness at the aspect of affairs in Rome. The pope even found means to propitiate his sanguinary foe, the cardinal Colonna. That turbulent prelate often visited the captives of St. Angelo to taunt Clement, whom he hated with fierce vindictiveness. The pope began the process of conciliation by acknowledging himself defeated, and by humbly admitting the supremacy of the house of Colonna in disposing of the papacy. He bestowed upon the arrogant cardinal the titles of arbiter of Christendom, and conqueror of the Popedom. He thus alternately flattered the cardinal, and bemoaned the calamities of the Holy See, and implored the protection of the Colonna, the scourge, as he declared, on the support of the tiara. The cardinal's fierceness was gradually subdued by these arts; and after a time Monçada was overwhelmed with astonishment at the demand made by the Colonna, that Rome should be evacuated, and the pontiff set at liberty. This revolution, brought about by the diplomacy of the imprisoned pontiff, certainly hastened his release. The treaty was speedily concluded through the agency of the general of the Franciscans, accredited for that purpose by Monçada. The pope promised to pay the sums of 67,000 ducats to the German troops, and 35,000 to the Spaniards, before he quitted Rome. He was compelled to bind himself again to the faithful performance of the treaty he had agreed to on the capitulation of the castle of St. Angelo to the prince of Orange; and to give as hostages his relatives Hyppolito and Alexandro de Medici, until five cardinals named by the emperor surrendered themselves in their place to the viceroy.*

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* De Lannoy died at Gaëta soon after the sack of Rome, 1527. Monçada, then viceroy of Sicily, was nominated as his successor.

At length the day arrived for the release of Clement, who was to be conducted to Orvieto or Spoleto by a division of the Spanish army. On the night of December 8th, 1527, however, the pope, distrustful of his late oppressors, contrived to escape from the castle of St. Angelo in the disguise of a merchant, or as some historians assert, in that of a valet; and escorted by a small troop of horse, commanded by Louis of Gongaza, reached Montefiascone in safety, from whence he proceeded the following day to Orvieto. Clement planned a scheme for the evasion of his hostages before quitting Rome: a project comparatively easy of accomplishment, as the approaching liberation of the pope caused the rigorous watch maintained at the gates of the city to be relaxed.† Thus twice was Charles disappointed of the advantages he hoped to derive from treaties wrung from prisoners when incarcerated in his fortresses. Though Clement did not positively disavow his treaty with the emperor, he published a bull detailing his miserable captivity, and annulling most of the ecclesiastical concessions he had been compelled to make. As the territory of St. Peter, ceded by him, was in the hands of divers claimants, the pope feared not that by his junction with one or other of the great dominant factions, it would be restored to the Holy See in all its integrity. Ambassadors from the League arrived daily at Orvieto; and the marshal de Lautrec journeyed thither expressly to congratulate his holiness, and to inquire his will.

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* Mezeray. Gailliard,—Hist. de François I. The cardinals demanded by the emperor as hostages were, Pisani, Trivulzio, Gaddo, Césis, and Orsini.

† Ibid.

Adversity, however, had taught Clement prudence; and after proffering his mediation to adjust the quarrel between the emperor and the king of France, he avowed his intention to wait and see what turn affairs might take before he declared himself an adherent either of the French or of the Imperial cause; or, in other words, the pope reserved the sanction of an alliance with the Holy See for the party who undertook to restore Florence to the subjection of the Medici. Lautrec therefore took leave of Clement, and marched to besiege Naples, having previously conquered and restored nearly the whole of the Milanese to Sforza.

Marguerite spent the Christmas of 1528 in Béarn. Her little daughter remained during the queen's absence at Lonray, a residence belonging to Madame de Silly,* close to Alençon. At Pau, Marguerite studied at leisure the doctrine of the reformers, probably aided by Gérard Roussel, who had found refuge from persecution in Béarn. Undisturbed by the religious factions of the capital, Marguerite here continued her poem of "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse," although a dark presentiment of coming evil clouded her tranquil enjoyments. She, who could read her brother's mind almost as her own, knew that sentiments bitterly hostile to reform, possessed him; and that the inconsiderate zeal of converts to the "new doctrines" had been exaggerated to the king, so as to kindle a deep aversion towards men represented as the fomenters of sedition throughout the realm. The king's foreign policy, his love of pompous ceremonial, the counsels of Madame, and the solicitations of Duprat, were powerful incentives to her brother to discountenance the so-called heresy. One day the king expressed some displeasure while conversing with the papal nuncio, relative to the lukewarmness displayed by the pope; and significantly hinted that further vacillation on the part of the supreme pontiff might be balanced, in a political sense, by the closer alliance of France with the German Lutherans, and the consequent toleration of their creed throughout the kingdom. "Sire," promptly responded the papal envoy, "you would be the first to repent of such a measure, as you would be a much greater loser than the pope. A new religion, adopted by an entire people, involves eventually the change of their prince and of his dynasty."* The reply of the legate appeared to make a deep impression on the king: it was impossible to touch upon a more sensitive chord; as jealous assertion of his kingly prerogatives was a prominent trait in the character of Francis.

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* The castle of Lonray eventually became the property of the House of Montmorency.

The king's umbrage at the spread of Lutheranism in France was increased by additional acts of intemperate zeal on the part of its professors. Despite the signal proof of displeasure he had given at the outrage perpetrated on the statue of the Virgin of the Rue des Rosiers, several images of saints, placed along the public thoroughfares of Paris, were torn from their niches and mutilated. So manifest a defiance of authority, and of the decrees of the council of Sens, it was deemed prudent to repress; for the daring independence displayed by the sectarians, alarmed the upholders of absolutism in the council. Just at this critical period, when the king's natural clemency of disposition, and the exhortations of his sister and the duchess d'Estampes, balanced the intolerant counsels of Madame, Duprat, and of Montmorency, Louis de Berquin was imprudent enough to become again the assailant of the Sorbonne. In vain Erasmus exhorted him to moderation. Once before he had checked Berquin's zeal with the words: "Remember that hornets must not be irritated; enjoy, therefore, your studies in peace. Above all, do not involve me in your disputes; it would be of no profit either to you or to me."† Relying, nevertheless, on his influence at court, Berquin attacked the university, and clamorously demanded the reversal of the censures pronounced on the works of his friend Erasmus; and redress for its past persecutions of himself. He presented memorial after memorial to the king, praying for justice, in language highly irritating to the Romish theologians. The Sorbonne was not backward in its retaliation: it renewed its solemn charge of heresy against Berquin; and demanded, that in accordance with the canons of the recent council of Sens, he should be again put on his trial for heresy. Duprat strenuously supported the demand made by the Faculty. As movements of extraordinary velocity result often from small impetus, so the king, predisposed to severity, adopted the opinions of his council, and signed an *ordonnance* permitting the resumption of Berquin's trial, which, unhappily, was but a prelude for countless acts of similar import. Twelve judges, selected from the members of the parliament of Paris, were chosen by the king, amongst whom was the celebrated Guillaume Budée, to preside at the trial, which opened with a ceremonial hitherto unknown in France upon an arraignment for heresy.*

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* Brantôme.

† Berquin wrote word back in reply to Erasmus, "that the time was arrived to humble the arrogance of the schoolmen."

When too late, Berquin became sensible of his imprudence. Daunted by the threatening aspect of the court, the friends who had before served him so faithfully, withdrew themselves. The queen of Navarre was in Béarn; the duchess d'Estampes lived in subservience to Madame; Duprat, the unscrupulous yet wary churchman, possessed the king's ear. To Marguerite, however, Berquin appealed—Marguerite, who from her distant home in Béarn, watched with solicitude the events of the capital. If earthly intercession could avail to move the king's purpose, Berquin knew that there existed no more powerful mediator than the queen of Navarre.

The peril which menaced Berquin aroused Marguerite's profound sympathy: with little hope of success, she yet determined to intercede in his behalf—arraigned for the third time before the Sorbonne, she felt that one whose writings identified him so completely with the proscribed opinions, would not be suffered to escape the heretic's doom. With sorrowful earnestness, Marguerite addressed the king thus:—

"Monseigneur,—Poor Berquin, who acknowledges that through your clemency God has twice preserved his life, will shortly appear again before you, having no person to explain his innocence, and to intercede with you; but knowing, monseigneur, how greatly you esteem him, and the desire which inspires him to serve you, I fear not to beseech you by letter, instead of by word of mouth, that it will please you again to take pity upon him. If you will deign to interest yourself in his cause, I hope that the truth which he may demonstrate will convict those forgers of heretics[*] of being rather slanderers, and disobedient to you, than zealous for the faith. But, monseigneur, assured as I am that you comprehend every plea that may be advanced in his favour, and do so maintain equity, that righteous men need no intercessor to recommend them to your gracious clemency, I will cease to plead. I beseech Him, who has endowed you with so many excellent graces and virtues, to give you a long and prosperous life, so that by you He may be praised long in this world, and eternally in that which is to come.

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I., Bayle.

"Your very humble and obedient subject and sister,

"MARGUERITE."[†]

Marguerite's intercession did not prevail to stay the trial, the king possibly having pledged himself to try the effect of severity for the suppression of reform; but her influence, probably, mitigated in the first instance the rigour of the sentence pronounced. Berquin, instead of being consigned at once to the flames, was condemned to make *amende honorable*, by a public abjuration of his heresy at the porch of Notre Dame. His books and writings were to be burned before his face by the public executioner; his tongue was to be pierced; his forehead branded with the fleur-de-lis, as a perpetual mark of ignominy; and he was to be incarcerated for life in the diocesan prison of Paris.[‡] Berquin firmly refused to make his abjuration; and appealed from the other portions of his sentence to the king and the pope. The learned Budée, who had been placed on this commission of inquiry against his will, vainly implored Berquin to recant, and avert the dreadful doom, the lot of the contumacious heretic. Berquin, however, had partaken too deeply of the consolations which the Scriptures in their simplicity and beauty bestow, to be tempted to purchase a remnant of life by apostacy. In his hour of extremity and desertion, one faithful friend still mourned with Berquin, and made ceaseless intercession for him before both the Heavenly and the earthly tribunal. Marguerite wrote to the king after his sentence had been recorded: "Monsieur, I conjure you deign to take pity upon poor

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[*] The University.

[†] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl. Fran., No. 93.

[‡] MSS. de St. Germain, No. 1556. Arrêt rendu contre Louis de Berquin.

Berquin. I know that he suffers tribulation only because he loves to read the Word of God, and to obey you. For which those who during your captivity did the contrary, being disobedient, have hated him; so much so that their malice and hypocrisy have found accusers, who have artfully rendered you oblivious of his guileless faith in God, and his devotion to yourself. If you will not condescend to hear from himself touching this matter, you will reduce him to despair. I beseech you, monseigneur, to act, so as it may not be said that absence has made you forget your very humble and obedient subject and sister, MARGUERITE."*

The entreaties of the queen of Navarre were useless: the "hornets" of the university who surrounded Berquin were merciless in the torture which they inflicted. A few days after his sentence had been pronounced, he was again brought before his judges, and condemned to the flames as an obstinate and contumacious heretic. Twenty thousand spectators assembled to witness the departure of the martyr from the Palais back to the diocesan prison, the Châtelet, where he was incarcerated. Berquin's sentence was executed on Saturday, April 24, 1529; he was conveyed to the Place de Grève in a tumbril, and suffered death with heroic fortitude in the presence of an immense assemblage.†

Early at the commencement of the year 1529, the queen of Navarre returned to Paris. The position of parties afforded her little inducement to mingle in the turbulent scenes enacting in the capital. The rivalry of Brion and the marshal de Montmorency also divided the court. The admiral, supple, insinuating, and dexterous, maintained his favour with the king by a refinement and suavity of deportment always acceptable to Francis. He was likewise favoured by Madame d'Estampes, who ever gave him her preference over Montmorency. The latter, however, possessed unquestioned influence in state affairs; his intimate *liaison* with the duchess d'Angoulême and with the queen of Navarre, invested him, in the eyes of the king, with an importance tenfold greater than that accruing to Brion from the patronage of Madame d'Estampes. Francis gave his confidence to Montmorency; but Brion was the favoured companion of his hours of relaxation. The marshal's unbending and warlike spirit was not able to adapt itself to the *persifflage* and witty trifles in which the king delighted; he could not, like Brion, partake in the enthusiasm of Francis for a sonnet, a beautiful picture, or share in his master's raptures at the sculptor's wondrous art. In the council, at court solemnities, or in headlong chase in pursuit of the stag through the deep glades of the forest of Fontainebleau, Montmorency knew no competitor. Jealous, nevertheless, of Brion's favour, inferior as it really was to his own, the marshal opposed the former in every possible manner. While Madame lived, neither of the rival factions obtained preponderance at court; she alike dominated over Montmorency and the duchess d'Estampes, and ruled the court by her absolute will: privately, however, both she and Marguerite expressed their sympathy with Montmorency in his broils with the admiral. The queen of Navarre wrote to Montmorency on her road to Blois. She expresses infinite impatience to arrive at the end of her journey; perhaps Marguerite hoped yet to save Berquin, as she reached Paris before his execution. After making a brief sojourn with the king, and with Madame at Blois, the queen proceeded to Alençon, to visit her little daughter at Lonray, and to administer divers affairs of importance connected with the government of the duchy. Marguerite found the princess Jeanne in flourishing health; but grown so frolicsome, that the queen tells Montmorency, on her arrival at Lonray, she tried in vain to take repose with the little princess by her side, but with playful mischief the child would not permit her to sleep.*

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl. Fran., No. 31.

† Arrêt de Louis de Berquin. MSS. de St. Germain, No. 1556. Bayle,—Dict. Hist.

When the queen had accomplished the object of her journey to the duchy, she quitted Lonray, and joined Madame at St. Germain. The king of Navarre was not there to greet her, as he had accompanied the king on a grand hunting excursion; for Francis carried his passion for the chase to excess. Amid the trackless forests which existed then in France, the king pursued his sport, sometimes for days together, traversing extraordinary distances. Occasionally an accident would separate him from his train amid the intricacies of the forest; and the varied incidents springing from an adventure of this kind, Francis loved to recount. Often the inhabitants of some secluded hamlet buried in the depths of the woods, were roused by the sight of the royal piqueurs in their brilliant uniforms, and by the deep tones of hounds in full cry. Suddenly then, riding at the head of a splendid train of courtiers, the king appeared; but ere the astonished peasants had leisure to utter their loyal *vivas*, the *cortège* vanished. An invitation to accompany Francis on one of these roving expeditions was considered as a mark of high distinction. The duchess d'Estampes, and some of the more daring ladies of the court often joined in them out of complaisance to the king; but the name of the queen of Navarre is never found on the list of these adventurous dames. The most magnificent entertainments were given by Francis at the various palaces at which he sojourned; gambling was often indulged in to a great extent by the dissipated nobles—freed then from the scrutiny of Madame, who kept a watchful eye on their proceedings. Marguerite seems to have had some apprehension that the king of Navarre might be seduced to play by the bad example of those around. She therefore writes expressly to commend him to the care of the prudent and sage Montmorency. "I commend to you the king of Navarre and his suite," says she; "you know that he is now with a party which will not spare him at play; therefore aid him by your good counsel."*

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* Lettre de la Reine de Navarre à M. le Grand Maître. MS. Bib. Roy. F. de Béth., No. 8549.

Meantime the fortune of the war in Italy continued less in favour of the French arms. The expedition against Naples proved a failure; but the most fatal blow to the success of the French was the decease of the marshal de Lautrec, who expired of the plague. The command then devolved upon the marquis of Saluzzo, "a man," says Guicciardini, "calculated to shine in a tournament, rather than at the head of an army." The circumstance which contributed powerfully to the failure of the siege of Naples, was the disaffection and final desertion from the cause of

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* Lettre de la Reine de Navarre à M. le Grand Maître. MS. Bibl. Roy. F. de Béth., No. 8620.

Francis, of the renowned Andrea Doria. In reward for the eminent services he had rendered to France, Doria demanded three things:—first, the freedom of Genoa, with permission to re-establish its ancient form of government, for which he offered to indemnify the king by a gift of 200,000 golden crowns. He requested that the port of Savona should be surrendered by the French, as its harbour being better than that of Genoa, threatened to ruin the commerce of the Genoese. Lastly, Doria demanded the ransom of the prince of Orange, which the French government had taken upon itself to pay to him, on the transfer of the prince,* as a prisoner of state, to the castle of Lusignan. These demands, which appear far from unreasonable, were absolutely refused by the king.† Unfortunately for the interest of Francis at the period when his affairs required ministers of the greatest ability and moderation, he confided their management to Duprat and Montmorency; and immersed in pleasure, seemed to take a respite from care of every description. Duprat advised the rejection of the demands made by Doria, to please the marshal de Montmorency, whom he flattered—because the king had bestowed upon him the lucrative gift of the dues levied on ships entering the port of Savona. Doria therefore understanding that the council had intrusted an order for his arrest to Barbezieux,‡ admiral of the fleet of the Levant, sent out to supersede him in command of the king's galleys, immediately opened negotiations with the emperor. The triumphs of Charles V. sprang almost invariably from the oversights committed by his impetuous and pleasure-loving rival. Remembering the havoc made in his fleet before Marseilles, and latterly in the naval combat in the Gulf of Salerno, by the veteran Genoese admiral, the emperor gladly received Doria's overtures. Bourbon, Orange, and Doria—names so renowned in the history of this century—men of the highest eminence both in the field and in the cabinet—twined more laurels round the emperor's brow than any culled for him by his own generals. The two first, subjects born of France, one a prince of the blood, the other the head of the illustrious family of Chalons, and connected with the royal House of Bourbon,*—Doria, also, bound by long services, and an intimate political as well as a personal interest to France,—were alienated by cold disregard of their services, and their culpable sacrifice by the king to the caprices and animosity of his reigning favourites. To the treason of Bourbon and Orange may be traced the reverses and calamities of the reign of Francis. The most splendid victory ever achieved by Charles was won for him at Pavia by the military science of the constable de Bourbon; the capture of the pope, the sack of Rome, and the final predominance of the Imperial arms in Italy after the raising of the siege of Naples, the emperor owed not to his own generals, Monçada and Leyva, but to the subject of France, the gallant young prince of Orange.

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* The prince was captured by the galleys of Andrea Doria in the naval combat before Marseilles, 1524.

† Mém de Du Bellay. Francis was sojourning at the time at the Hôtel des Tuileries.

‡ François de la Rochefoucault, Seigneur de Barbezieux, son of François, count de la Rochefoucault, by his second wife, Louise de Crussol. The countess was much favoured by the queen of Navarre.

By the defection of Andrea Doria, France lost the empire of the sea; and to balance the maritime superiority thereby accruing to the emperor, the king was eventually compelled to form that alliance offensive and defensive with the sultan Soliman II., which drew upon him the reproaches of Christendom.

The war in Italy languished after the retreat of the French forces from before Naples. The recapture of Pavia by the French was more than counterbalanced by the conquest of Genoa by Doria, to whom the more politic Charles had granted the demands refused him by the king of France. The last event of the war was the surprise of Landriano by Antonio de Leyva, and the capitulation of the count de St. Paul and the French garrison. After this the Imperialists, as well as their opponents, by mutual consent suspended hostilities. The devastation of the country, the starving population, the ravages of pestilence, and the ruin of the fairest cities of Italy, battered and pillaged of their wealth, presented a spectacle of such utter desolation, that her fierce invaders themselves refrained from adding to calamity so appalling. The pope, who had by turns endured every evil which war of the most aggravated description can inflict, was the first to make overtures for peace. The despotic authority of the Medici over the Florentines had been totally overthrown during the troubles in Italy, and their family banished from Florence. To obtain the restoration of his aspiring house was the project paramount above others in the negotiations of Clement with the emperor. Charles anxiously desired to receive the Imperial crown from the pope's hands; for until after the ceremony of his coronation, his dignity was deemed imperfect, and in state documents from foreign powers, he was addressed only as the "elect emperor." Private interests, therefore, blending thus with political and patriotic motives, a treaty was negotiated between the emperor and the pope, and proclaimed with great ceremony in the cathedral of Barcelona, during the month of June, 1529. Its principal stipulations were that the emperor should re-establish the Medici in Florence, and bestow his natural daughter, Marguerite, in marriage on Alexander de Medici, Clement's nephew; and that all the places and ports appertaining to the territories of the Holy See, should be restored. The pope, on his part, granted the investiture of Naples to Charles and his successors, on condition of the annual presentation of a white horse in token of the vassalage of the sovereign of Naples to the Holy See. The pope, moreover, agreed to share with the emperor the right of nominating to ecclesiastical benefices within the Neapolitan dominions.*

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* The mothers of the duchess d'Angoulême and of the prince of Orange were sisters—Marguerite and Jeanne de Bourbon, daughters of Charles, duke de Bourbon, and of Agnes of Burgundy.

This treaty satisfactorily concluded, the most difficult task remained yet to accomplish, which was to restore the equilibrium of Europe by the reconciliation of the emperor with Francis I. The profound personal enmity of the two princes had to be vanquished, as well as their political differences adjusted; for the recollection of the insulting epithets so liberally applied at the period of their mutual defiance, still rankled in their hearts. The necessity, however, was imperative: France stood on the brink of ruin; another adverse campaign was sufficient to exhaust her financial resources. Neither was the condition of the emperor much superior to that of his rival: the devastations of the Infidels in Hungary and in the duchy of Austria; the fierce contentions agitating Germany; and the spirit of democracy which ranged at large in the provinces of the Low Countries, and from which Spain herself was not exempt, warned Charles to make timely concession. The duchess d'Angoulême offered to undertake this important negotiation; while the emperor nominated his aunt, the archduchess Marguerite of Austria, widow of Philibert II., duke of Savoy, and regent of the Low Countries.*

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* Mezeray,—Abrégé Chronolog.

The town of Cambray was selected for the theatre of the negotiations. The duchess d'Angoulême arrived there in the month of July, 1529, accompanied by Marguerite and the king of Navarre, and attended by a numerous suite. It was always a part of the policy of Francis I. to impress the emperor with an exalted idea of the wealth and boundless resources of his kingdom. Madame, therefore, made her entry into Cambray with ostentatious parade. She was preceded by an almost interminable train of baggage-waggons, cars, and mules laden with coffers. The number of these vans is stated to have been three thousand, and that the procession took more than two hours to defile through the gates of the town. The cars, when emptied of their contents at the palace assigned to the duchess d'Angoulême, were then driven outside the town to an open space, where a huge encampment, with tents for the shelter of the numerous attendants and the beasts of burden was formed. When the baggage had passed, the bishop of Cambray, and the principal Flemish and Spanish nobility o the court of the archduchess rode out in procession to receive and escort Madame and her suite into the town. Four hundred pages and gentlemen-at-arms, clad in gorgeous costumes, preceded a brilliant cavalcade of the chief nobles of France, who rode two and two before the open litter in which sate the duchess d'Angoulême and the queen of Navarre. Amongst the nobles were the chancellor Duprat cardinal de Sens, the marshal de Montmorency, the admiral de Brion, the counts de la Tour, de Humières, and de Chateaubriand, with many other nobles and prelates. Around the litter in which Madame and her daughter sate, marched four-and-twenty Swiss guards, bareheaded, carrying their halberds, and wearing rich chains of gold. Another very richly adorned litter followed that occupied by Madame, in which rode the duchess de Vendôme and her mother-in-law, the duchess-dowager de Vendôme, and the countess de la Trimouille, a lady also of the blood-royal of France. Then followed a great number of the unmarried ladies of the court, mounted on palfreys superbly trapped with housings of crimson-velvet fringed with gold. Another detachment of guards and archers attended this long procession of horsewomen; and the cavalcade closed by a line of chariots drawn by mules, conveying the attendants of all the royal and noble ladies in the procession.*

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* Marguerite, daughter of the emperor Maximilian I., by his first consort, Mary, heiress of Charles le Téméraire, duke of Burgundy, was born in 1480. After the dissolution of her engagement to Charles VIII., the hand of Marguerite was demanded by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain, for their only son and heir John, prince of Asturias; whom she espoused in 1497. The prince survived his union scarcely a year: Marguerite then returned to her father, and in 1501, married Philibert II., duke of Savoy, brother of the duchess d'Angoulême. Again left a widow in 1504, Marguerite governed the Low Countries for some years, with equal ability and prudence, as regent for her nephew Charles V. She died in 1530.

Madame and the queen of Navarre immediately proceeded to the Abbaye de St. Aubert, to visit the archduchess Marguerite, who awaited them with impatience. The princesses embraced with great cordiality, and they afterwards conversed apart for some minutes. Marguerite and her mother then retired to the lodgings prepared for their reception in the Hotel de St. Paul: yet, despite the cordiality of their reception, the remembrance of the complicated negotiations at Toledo, and the inflexibility then displayed by the emperor and his ministers, caused many a boding presentiment to rise in the mind of Madame and her daughter.

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* Sandoval,—Historia del emperador Carlos V., lib. xvii. Louisa, in the opinion of the Spanish historians, put the crowning point to the haughtiness of her deportment, by demanding that the keys of the town of Cambray should be delivered to her every night. This request the authorities of the town contrived to evade.

All the European powers watched with indescribable interest the opening of the conferences: ambassadors arrived at Cambray from the confederated princes of Italy; Henry VIII., king of England, despatched the bishop of London and Sir Thomas More to aid in a negotiation to restore to France the children "of his very dear brother and perpetual ally."* Madame and the archduchess Marguerite continued to meet on terms of most cordial amity; and in order to conduct their conferences with greater secrecy and dispatch, a private communication was opened between their abodes, which were contiguous.†

The old ground of the negotiation was industriously retraced by the two illustrious ladies; the emperor, at first, insisting on nothing less than the adoption of the treaty of Madrid without modifications. Madame, however, proved inflexible as Marguerite had been during her sojourn at Toledo, in rejecting its many objectionable clauses; and, at one time, affairs took so adverse a turn, that the plenipotentiaries were on the point of closing their parley. If Madame had not possessed more moderation and patience than her impetuous son, Europe might have deplored the prospective miseries of a renewed contest. The duchess d'Angoulême despatched Du Bellay with letters to the king, who was at Compiègne, detailing the obstacles she met with. Irritated beyond measure, Francis, as soon as he had perused his mother's despatch, wrote as follows:—"Madame,‡ Langey is just arrived, and has made me comprehend the treatment you have received, and their last reply to your proposals. As you justly observe, God is on our side, who is judge of the sincerity with which we have proceeded in the matter of this peace; therefore, Madame, I regret the trouble that you have taken; which, however, cannot be said to be without its fruit, if only for the example of courteous deportment that you have displayed before them. Since the emperor esteems my friendship so little, and has so great a desire to achieve the ruin of my kingdom, I have good faith in God that ere long he will be made to feel that I should have proved as desirable a friend as I am now a desperate foe. Therefore, Madame, I pray you believe that God does everything for the best, and give yourself no more concern, but return to me without delay."

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* Letter of the cardinal Wolsey to the duchess d'Angoulême. MSS. de Béth., No. 8530, fol. 15. This letter is published by Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

† Sandoval,—Hist. del emperador Carlos V.

‡ Bibl. Roy. MSS. de Béth., No. 8506.—Capefigue.

Madame, however, aware how indispensable was peace to her son's affairs, determined to persevere. In a few days, the archduchess wrote to inform her that the emperor consented at last to waive his claim to Burgundy, and to accept the two millions of golden crowns in lieu, so long fruitlessly tendered by Francis. This grand impediment removed, Madame and the archduchess renewed their conference: the greatest mystery was observed by the two princesses; and the dissimulation of the duchess d'Angoulême effectually baffled the precautions of the ambassadors of the League, who were fearful—and, as it proved, not without reason—that their interests would be overlooked in the treaty then under consideration. At length the convention, which it had required four years of perpetual recrimination to complete, was proclaimed to be accomplished. The clauses of the treaty of Madrid were rigidly adopted, except in the matter touching the cession of Burgundy; in lieu of which, and for the ransom of his sons, Francis was to pay the emperor the sum of two millions of golden crowns, or 200,000 pounds sterling. The marriage of the king of France with queen Eleanor was confirmed; but an additional clause was inserted in the treaty, stipulating "that if sons should be born to Francis and Eleanor, they should inherit the duchy of Burgundy, to the prejudice of the elder children of the king." The emperor stipulated, moreover, for the reversal of Bourbon's attainder, and that his heirs should be reinstated: the principality of Orange was likewise to be restored to Philibert de Chalons, and an indemnity for its sequestration paid to the prince of 10,000 golden ducats. Francis agreed to undertake the liquidation of the emperor's debt to Henry VIII., as before arranged; and, moreover, to redeem from the king of England, for the sum of 50,000 crowns, a golden fleur-de-lis, richly jewelled, and containing a fragment of the true cross, which had been left in pledge to Henry VII. by the emperor's father, the archduke Don Philip, on his passage through England in 1506.*

Francis thus obtained, as far as he was himself concerned, the reception of the terms that he had offered to the emperor's envoy, the Sieur de Präet, at Bayonne, immediately after his return from captivity. Though the treaty of Cambray confirmed the king in the possession of the duchy of Burgundy, he was reduced to the humiliating necessity of abandoning his allies to the mercy of the emperor; who, exasperated at the defection of the Italian princes, and foreseeing a speedy opportunity of vengeance, quitted Spain and landed at Genoa, even while these negotiations were pending, with an army of 10,000 men; while Felix of Wirtemburg entered Italy at the head of a large body of mercenary troops, and joined Charles at Placenza.† Great, therefore, was the consternation felt by the representatives of the confederate princes assembled at Cambray, when they were apprised of the nature of the treaty concluded between the royal ladies: the assurances of the duchess d'Angoulême, that nothing should be concluded against or without the assent of the late allies of her son, had inspired a degree of confidence which augmented their disappointment. Yet the very existence of France depended on the successful negotiation of peace: and this fact was, unhappily, so notorious, that the ambassadors of the Italian princes seemed almost to indulge in wilful delusion by supposing that France, in her extremity, could afford to stipulate for other interests than her own.

The peace so urgently needed was signed on the 24th of July, between the hours of ten and eleven at night, and proclaimed with great ceremony in the church of Notre Dame de Cambray, in the presence of the queen of Navarre, of the duchess d'Angoulême, and of the archduchess Marguerite of Austria, on the 4th day of August, 1529.‡ High mass was first chanted by the bishop of

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* Mém. de Du Bellay,—Sleidan Commentar. Sandoval,—Hist. del Emp. Carlos V.

† Mezeray,—Abrégé Chronolog.

‡ Eloges de Enfans de France, par Hilarion de Coste.

Cambray. When this service concluded, the duchess d'Angoulême, the archduchess Marguerite, and the duke of Suffolk, envoy-extraordinary from the king of England, rose simultaneously from their seats, and approaching the high altar, kneeled on cushions of cloth of gold. The bishop of Cambray then received the oath for the solemn maintenance of the treaty, made in the name of the Emperor, and the kings of France and England, by the two duchesses and the duke of Suffolk, who each laid a hand on the Holy Scriptures, and upon a fragment of the true cross, during the ceremony. Te Deum was then chanted, and largesse proclaimed to the people. Madame afterwards adopted a singular method of testifying her liberality in celebration of this happy event. She caused a magnificent platform to be erected outside the hotel de St. Paul—the palace she occupied in Cambray. A buffet of rich plate, consisting of drinking vessels and platters, was placed upon it by her command; and throughout that day and the following one, spiced wines, hypocras, and other refreshments, were liberally served to all who presented themselves.*

Madame next hastened to apprise her son of the circumstance. "The security, monsieur, in which your royal person is placed by the peace which it has pleased God to bestow upon you, gives me such contentment that I esteem my own life as nothing in comparison to this blessing," wrote the duchess† to her idolized son, immediately after the ceremony concluded. "As I understand by your letters, and from M. le grand maître,‡ that all I have done meets with your complete approbation, I regard my past toils as hours spent in pleasant and delightful repose; and I certify to you, monseigneur, that you have been communicating with one whose highest happiness and glory it is to see you satisfied and prosperous."

The king immediately repaired to Cambray to give his personal ratification to the Paix des Dames, and to confer with the archduchess regent of the Low Countries. It is related that for several days, Francis excused himself from granting audience to the ambassadors of his late allies; and that when at length their clamorous demand for an interview could no longer be evaded, the king received them with painful restraint. Francis shrank from making even the implied avowal that the banner of France was no longer potent enough to shield his allies. He excused himself for giving assent to such a treaty, by pleading the necessity of his kingdom, and his ardent impatience to deliver his sons from captivity.

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* Sandoval,—Hist. del Emp. Carlos V., lib. xvii.

† Bibl. du Roi., MSS. de Béth., No. 8471. Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

‡ The marshal de Montmorency.

Such was the final issue of the battle of Pavia; the conditions of peace which had been so peremptorily rejected by Marguerite while at Toledo, were accepted after her departure as a *dernier ressort* by Montmorency, and afterwards by the king, to meet with disavowal on the return of Francis to his kingdom. The articles then proposed by the king and rejected by Charles V., after nearly three years of bloodshed and calamity, were eventually received by the emperor, and formed the basis of the peace of Cambray.

To Madame,

"Mère a bon droit, qui soy-même s'oblye
Pour conserver ceulx-là qui d'elle ont vie!"[*]

was reserved the glory of concluding the pacification which restored comparative prosperity to France; and that repaired, in some degree, the calamities occasioned by the rebellion of the constable de Bourbon—an event which her own pride and avarice had so fatally influenced.

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[*] Epitre du Roi à Madame Marguerite, sa sœur.

CHAPTER III.

Departure of the king and queen of Navarre from Cambray for Blois—Marguerite requests the see of Alby for the bishop of Tarbes—Bestowed by Madame on Duprat—Departure of the court for Fontainebleau—Levy of the ransom of the princes—Contributions of the king and queen of Navarre and of the nobles—Energy displayed by the nation—Mission of Du Bellay to Henry VIII.—Generosity of the king of England—Patronage afforded by Francis and Marguerite to art—The magnificence of the court—The king of Navarre and the marshal de Montmorency are commissioned to proceed to the frontier to negotiate the return of the princes—Queen Marguerite's delicate health—Her arrival at Blois—The departure of the king of Navarre for Bayonne—Letter of queen Marguerite to Montmorency—Disappointment of the queen that her health prevents her from accompanying the king to Bordeaux—Negotiations on the frontier—Alloy of the specie—Anger of the constable of Spain—Firmness displayed by queen Eleanor—Preparations for the reception of the queen and the princes at St. Jean de Luz—Departure of the king and of Madame for Bordeaux—Queen Marguerite remains at Blois—Correspondence of Marguerite with the marshal—The exchange of the princes for the ransom—Dignified deportment of queen Eleanor—The landing of the queen and the princes—Their rapturous welcome—Their entry into the town of St. Jean de Luz—Departure of the king from Bordeaux for Rochefort—Letter written by the queen of Navarre to her brother—Entry of queen Eleanor into the town of Bayonne—Eleanor's reception by king Francis—The delight of the princes—Marriage of Francis with Eleanor—The king notifies the arrival of his children to queen Marguerite—Her reply—Her letter to Montmorency—Entry of queen Eleanor into Bordeaux—Her magnificent reception—The queen's attire—Procession to the cathedral—Interview between Eleanor and Madame at Touars—Occupations of the queen of Navarre at Blois—She prefers numerous petitions to Montmorency—She gives birth to a son—Letter of Madame de Toirviron to Madame—Delight manifested by king

Francis at the birth of his nephew—His edict on the occasion—Arrival of the king at Blois—The court removes to Fontainebleau—Rapid recovery of the queen of Navarre—Position of queen Eleanor—Dislike manifested towards her by the king—Francis and his sister pursue together their study of art—Illness of Marguerite's infant son—Departure of the king and queen of Navarre for Alençon—Death of the young prince—The queen's excessive grief—Her letter to her brother—Reply of the king—Indisposition of queen Marguerite—She writes to Montmorency—Return of the king and queen of Navarre to court—Coronation of queen Eleanor—The queen's entry into Paris—Banquets given at the Palais and the Hotel de Ville in honour of this event.

THE king and the queen of Navarre, meantime, took their departure from Cambray soon after the arrival of the king, and journeyed to Blois, where they remained together until joined by Madame, after the conclusion of her conference with the archduchess regent.

Notwithstanding the poverty of the kingdom, Francis continued to enlarge and embellish his numerous palaces; and improvements on an extensive scale were in progress at Blois when Marguerite and her husband arrived there. The queen issued directions that great expedition should be made to complete the works before the arrival of Madame and the king. The buildings, nevertheless, progressed so slowly, that when this event occurred Madame found the castle in so comfortless a condition that, needing repose after her recent exertions, she immediately removed with Marguerite to Fontainebleau.

During her brief sojourn at Blois, Marguerite, whom everybody petitioned, wrote to request the king to bestow the bishopric of Alby, vacant by the decease of Aymar de Gouffier, on her faithful friend Gabriel de Grammont, bishop of Tarbes. Marguerite never forgot the zeal which the bishop displayed to advance her brother's interests during the conferences of Toledo. "Monseigneur," writes the queen,* "if it be true, as it has so often been reported, that M. d'Alby is deceased, I pray you to remember M. de Tarbes. The reason which makes me bold enough to write on the subject is, that never have I seen him weary in rendering you service, nor have I ever heard him petition you for aught." This last reason, it might be supposed, would have been conclusive to incline Francis to favour the bishop of Tarbes, surrounded as he was by rapacious courtiers, many of whom greedily and indecorously bespoke place and office before the dignity they coveted lapsed. The claims of Marguerite's *protégé* were, however, opposed by the formidable competition of the cardinal chancellor Duprat, who, supported by the duchess d'Angoulême, added the see of Alby, as a reward for the services which he had just rendered at Cambray, to his other numerous ecclesiastical benefices.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy. F. du Suppl. Fran., No. 24.

The king of Navarre, meanwhile, remained in Paris to superintend the collection of the money requisite for the ransom of the dauphin and his brother; for the sum previously granted to the king for the purpose had been expended in the prosecution of the war. During the four months subsequent to the ratification of the treaty of Cambray, the greatest activity prevailed. The sum of twelve hundred thousand gold crowns, which Charles had stipulated for to be paid by the 1st of March, 1530, before the young princes were permitted to touch the soil of France, was an amount of money so enormous, especially in the impoverished condition of the French exchequer, as apparently to render its levy impossible in so short a period. By the ancient feudal laws of the country, the king had a right to demand extraordinary aids from the three estates of his kingdom on the following four contingencies:—1st, in case of the captivity of the king, or of his children; 2nd, on the marriage of his son or of his eldest daughter; 3rd, on the knighthood of his son; and 4th, to maintain a national war against a foreign foe. To Duprat, his dexterous finance minister, Francis confided the levy of this general subsidy for the ransom of his sons. Every town throughout the realm contributed with noble promptitude to the call. Paris alone gave four thousand gold crowns. The church, the nobles, and hundreds of private gentlemen contributed largely. Loans were joyfully lent on the sole security of treasury bonds, by numbers of individuals—a dangerous experiment under the ministry of the unscrupulous chancellor. With all these contributions, still the required amount fell short. Francis then appealed again to his nobles, after first setting the example of sending to the mint articles of *virtù* to an immense amount in gold, to be melted down and coined into crowns. The king of Navarre, who had so zealously served the king before in a similar emergency, rendered now still more effectual service. He gave silver vessels of very considerable value to be coined into money; while Marguerite sacrificed all her gold and silver plate for the same purpose. The example set by the royal family was followed by the cardinal chancellor, by the marshal de Montmorency, the admiral de Brion, the archbishop of Bourges, and by the high bailiff, the provost, and the governor of Paris, who all, upon receiving a simple acknowledgment, sacrificed their *argenterie* for the deliverance of the royal children.* It redounds to the credit of Francis to state, that at a more prosperous period of his reign, exact restitution was made by him of all the articles so liberally lent. The most remarkable incident connected with this spontaneous levy is, that nowhere is the contribution made by the duchess d'Angoulême to purchase the freedom of her grandchildren on record. She then possessed enormous wealth from the confiscated estates of the unfortunate constable de Bourbon, assigned her by the king: besides, it was ascertained after her decease, that at the very time the kingdom was taxed to the utmost to raise the sum demanded by the emperor, Madame had eleven hundred thousand gold crowns in her private treasury. It can only be presumed, therefore, from the repeated marks of devotion to the cause of her son which Madame had given, that perceiving the liberal disposition of the nobles to contribute to the ransom of the princes, she reserved her own treasures for contingencies—which under the improvident rule of Francis were sure to occur—of a nature less likely to enlist popular sympathy.

When a sufficient quantity of precious metal was amassed, another difficulty arose in the apparent impossibility of coining so large an amount of money by the period specified in the treaty. The emperor's subtle tactics were so much dreaded, that, lest he should make any unavoidable delay a pretext to declare the treaty null, Francis instructed his ambassador to request Charles to accept part of the treasure in ingots—a prayer the Imperial council thought proper to refuse.

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* Capefigue,—Hist. de François I., et la Renaissance.

Guillaume du Bellay* was next despatched to London to treat with Henry VIII. respecting the sum of nine hundred thousand crowns, which Francis had taken upon himself to liquidate for the emperor, in addition to the two millions payable for the ransom of the princes. King Henry behaved in the most noble and generous manner towards his "dear friend and perpetual ally." He remitted altogether the fiye hundred thousand golden crowns which the emperor owed him as an indemnity for the violation of his marriage contract with the princess Mary; he declined to receive payment of the remaining sum of 400,000 crowns for the space of five years, and presented the jewel which the king had engaged to redeem for the sum of 50,000 crowns, as a gift to his godson, the duke of Orleans.†

During these negotiations the queen of Navarre remained at Fontainebleau with Madame, whose health was daily becoming more uncertain. About this time Marguerite took into her service the brother of the king's painter Jannet, an artist of considerable merit. The queen wrote to the chancellor of her duchy of Alençon, directing that a pension of 200l. might be assigned Jannet, whom she desires may be immediately despatched to her at Fontainebleau, as she had present need for the exercise of his talent.‡ Both Francis and his sister accorded munificent patronage to art of every description. Painters, poets, and sculptors found cordial welcome at the court of France; and with noble liberality the king dispensed to them pensions out of his private revenues. The privy purse accounts of the reign of Francis are filled with memoranda of his generosity, and his patronage of art and science, whenever the opportunity to do so presented itself. To one Bertellemi Guetti, who painted a portrait of Francis, the king assigned over and above the stipulated price of his labour, a free gift of 900l. Tournois. Two pictures painted in oils, representing scenes of the Passion of our Lord, the king bought of Jean Dubois, of Antwerp, for the sum of 280l. Tournois. To Jean Gontier, a student of medicine in

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* Sieur de Langey.

† Mém. de Martin Du Bellay.

‡ MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8516.

Paris, the king granted 205l. Tournois, for a translation of Galen.* The royal liberalities of Francis extended to the poorest of his subjects. He gives the sum of 40s. to a poor woman who had presented him with a nosegay. To two men whose corn had been trampled down during one of the royal hunts, he assigns 41s. Tournois. Two English scholars who sang before the king at Chantilly, were rewarded by a gift of 8l. 4 sols. The king purchased also from Gaspar Raoul for the sum of 820l. Tournois, three cases of melodious instruments, such as flutes, cornets, horns, and hautboys, "for the especial delight of the king during his hours of recreation." In works of art in gold, silver, and jewels, Francis expended enormous sums. His palaces were adorned by the exquisite sculptures of Benvenuto Cellini. Cups, shields, and rich carvings of Scriptural subjects glittering with jewels, adorned his buffets. The decorations of the altars in his various chapels dazzled the beholder: ivory and gold were moulded into vases, chalices, and reliquaries by the wonderful art of Finiguerra or Cellini. Images of the saints, and especially of the Holy Virgin, of exquisite beauty, kindled the fervour of the faithful; and shrines of costly filigree work, studded with gems of priceless worth, adorned the chapels of the Louvre, and those of the palaces of Fontainebleau and Blois.

The looms of Flanders and of Genoa yielded the magnificent king and his court fabrics of silk, velvet, cloth of gold and of silver, and damasks. Marguerite's usual article of apparel was velvet, when not attired for court ceremonies: on such occasions etiquette required that she should array herself in a costly robe of cloth of gold glittering with jewels. Madame d'Estampes usually selected cloth of silver for her habits of ceremony, which harmonized well with the transparent clearness of her complexion.

In the adornment of the chambers of his palace, Francis showed no less profusion. Carvings in wood of marvellous finish wreathed the portals and the ceilings of innumerable apartments in the king's favourite castles of Chambord and Fontainebleau. Venetian mirrors in frames elaborately adorned, reflected the rich silken hangings powdered with fleurs-de-lis, or embossed with the king's device and initial, and the ebony cabinets inlaid with gold, silver, and mother of pearl, placed in all the apartments. Within these cabinets were inestimable treasures of art: enamel portraits of the most beautiful women of the court; gems engraved with Scriptural subjects; silver filigree work; jewelled medallions of saints; and scent boxes filled with rare perfumes. Musk was the favourite perfume at the court of Francis; because its costliness was excessive. In the privy purse accounts is an entry of the payment of Jean Scaron, merchant of Lyons, for thirty ounces of musk, at the price of thirteen golden crowns the ounce. Books richly blazoned were dispersed throughout the royal apartments for the edification of the courtiers: some contained records of the chivalrous deeds of renowned knights of old, or during the earlier period of the reign of Francis; beneath the gorgeous covers of others reposed the heretical, yet eloquent orations of Lefèvre, or of his patron the bishop of Meaux, of Erasmus, or of Louis de Berquin. Almost all things that the world then produced, beautiful to the eye, or ravishing to the senses, were to be found within the palaces of the king of France. Marguerite, therefore, when absent at her distant palaces of Argentan or Nérac, never felt completely happy, or ceased to pine for the refinements of her brother's court. Identified with the king as the equal sharer of his confidence and his magnificence, Marguerite, "his second self," "his *mignonne*," as Francis called her, was his constant companion, and the only personage with whom, throughout his reign, the king unbent at all times both in public and in private. Great as was the secret influence of Madame d'Estampes, she was not exempted from the profound deference exacted by the king from every member of his court towards the royal family; and one of the causes which tended most to perpetuate her power, was her pliability of character, and her deference to the imperious will animating the son of Louisa of Savoy.

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* Comptes des Dépenses de François I. Archives du Royaume. Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

The coinage of the crowns for the ransom of the dauphin and his brother continued with unremitting dispatch throughout the autumn of 1529, and the first few months of the following year; so that by the beginning of March, 1530, the stipulated sum was ready for delivery. The three deputies named by the king to proceed to the frontier to meet the Spanish envoys, were the king of Navarre, the marshal de Montmorency, and the archbishop of Embrun, who since the conferences of Toledo had been translated to the archiepiscopal see of Bourges. .

Marguerite was at this period again within little more than four months of her *accouchement;* consequently not being able to travel rapidly, she quitted Fontainebleau very early in the month of March for Blois, leaving the king and Madame to follow. It was Marguerite's great desire to accompany her brother to Bayonne, to meet queen Eleanor and the young princes. Her disappointment was therefore severe, that her condition rendered the accomplishment of this wish uncertain; though, if no impediment arose to retard the exchange of the princes, the queen hoped to be able to witness Eleanor's marriage. Accordingly, escorted by the king of Navarre, she commenced the first stage of her journey southward. On the day following Marguerite's arrival at Blois, the king of Navarre set out to join Montmorency at Bayonne. The queen hastened to write to the marshal to inform him of her husband's departure from Blois: by her perpetual recommendations of him to Montmorency's care, it would seem as if Marguerite dreaded the effects of the dissipations of the court on the king's character. "When the king of Navarre arrives," wrote Marguerite to the marshal, "I pray you counsel him in all that he has to do, for we both place perfect confidence in you. As you are with him, I fear not that everything will go well; excepting that I am afraid you cannot prevent him from paying assiduous court to the Spanish ladies."* Though the firmest mutual attachment subsisted between the king and queen of Navarre, Henry's devoted homage to the fair dames of the court was a subject upon which, throughout her life, Marguerite was peculiarly susceptible. Being both fascinating and gallant, the popularity of the king of Navarre was great; and his joyous and frank disposition sometimes led him into greater compliances with the dissipated fashions of the court than Marguerite quite approved.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8549.

The king and the duchess d'Angoulême arrived at Blois before the 8th of March, on their road to Bayonne. Marguerite, however, whose health always suffered dreadfully during her pregnancies, was so much indisposed as to render it unsafe, in the opinion of Madame, for her to continue her journey. The duchess, therefore, at once decided that her daughter should remain at Blois until after her *accouchement.* If Madame had then continued her journey to the frontier, the disappointment would have been overwhelming to Marguerite; but suddenly the most serious interruption occurred to Montmorency's embassy, which, but for the decision evinced by queen Eleanor, would have again met with an untimely and disgraceful failure. The cardinal chancellor, whose artifice was never at rest, conceived the notable project, unknown to his royal master, of authorizing an alloy of the precious metal coined into crowns, in order to appropriate the surplus to replenish the treasury.[*] A rumour of this fraudulent device coming to the ears of the Imperial envoys, the metal was tested, and found to be a mixture of gold and copper. The indignation of the fiery constable of Castille, Velasco duke de Frias, chief of the Spanish deputies, was unbounded: he suspended all negotiation; and but for the urgent remonstrance of queen Eleanor, would instantly have remanded the young princes to their dreary prison at Pedraço. Eleanor wrote pressing letters to Madame, praying her to interpose; and in consequence of the queen's representations, orders were despatched authorizing Montmorency to offer compensation to the Spanish deputies for the deficiency in the weight and value of the specie. The negotiation was at length resumed; but as no reliance could be placed in the loyal integrity of Duprat, the most humiliating scrutiny commenced of the moneys delivered. The masters of the French and of the Spanish mints met on the frontier: each gold piece was separately tested, weighed, and deposited in a strong chest supplied by the Spaniards.[†] Forty-eight cases were thus filled, and sealed with the signets of the French and Imperial envoys, each one containing the sum of 25,000 crowns. Four months were consumed in this tedious process, during which, queen Eleanor and the young princes remained at Fuenterrabia, under the *surveillance* of the constable of Castille.

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[*] Mém. de Du Bellay. Dupleix.

[†] Ibid. Eloges des Enfans de France, par Hilarion de Coste.

The most magnificent preparations, meantime, were in progress in all the royal palaces for the reception of the new queen. Eleanor's arrival having been expected in March, the ceremony of her coronation and entry into Paris had been commanded by the king for the end of that month, and missives were sent by Francis to the parliament and provost of Paris, admonishing them to have all things in readiness by that time for the reception of their sovereign lady, queen Eleanor of Austria. Splendid tapestries were ordered to be woven for the occasion, according to patterns specially designed for the king. The subject of one piece was a Leda surrounded by nymphs and satyrs, which was to be woven very sumptuously with threads of silk. Another was a landscape for which the sum of 410l. Tournois was to be paid. All this preparation was rendered useless by the evil dealing of the chancellor, who had been so long in the habit of raising finances by devices little creditable to him, that he was callous to the fact, that his master's honour suffered seriously by the flagrant imposition he had just sanctioned.*

This delay rendered it totally impossible for the queen of Navarre to accompany Madame to Bayonne. The consort of the marshal de Montmorency, meantime, who was likewise prevented from sharing in the fatiguing ceremonies of the queen's reception, was invited by Madame to pass the interval of her absence with Marguerite. Madame also decided that the duchess de Vendôme should remain with the queen of Navarre, to afford her pleasant society and consolation. Marguerite expressed great eagerness for the arrival of Madame de Montmorency; and Madame even condescended to write to the marshal, and request that he would hasten the departure of his consort for Blois. The queen offered to send her barge and rowers up the river Loire to Gien, to meet Madame de Montmorency,* who, nevertheless, for some reason which appears to have been satisfactory to Marguerite and her mother, declined the invitation, and remained at Chantilly.

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* Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

The king and Madame quitted Blois about the end of April and journeyed to Amboise. Here Francis entertained his expectant court with a fight between the lions kept in the royal menagerie at Amboise and a bull. After a brief sojourn at the castle, the king advanced by slow journeys to Bordeaux, where he took up his abode, pending the settlement of the fierce disputes of daily occurrence between the deputies on the frontier. Marguerite assigns unbounded praise to Montmorency for the temper and diplomacy which he manifested, and the tact displayed by him in rescuing the French cabinet from the embarrassing position in which they were placed by Duprat's artifice. In a letter which Marguerite wrote to Madame de Châtillon, sister of the marshal de Montmorency,† she says: "If M. de Bayonne returns to aid the grand master in his negotiation, beg him to say to the latter from me, that there is nobody who thanks God with greater sincerity than I do that this affair is likely to terminate so honourably for him; and that not only does he lay both master and mistress under the deepest obligation, but he binds our race in gratitude to him and his, even to the fourth generation."‡ In another letter written to Montmorency himself, Marguerite, after lamenting her absence from the scene of negotiation, and her separation from Madame and the king, writes: "I thank God, after so many hindrances and vexations, that He has at length given you grace to attain our ends with such credit and honour, that father, grandmother, and all who love the princes, must be either very ignorant or very ungrateful who did not feel more obligation to you than to any other individual."§ The end that Marguerite congratulated

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8550.

† Louise de Montmorency, daughter of Guillaume, baron de Montmorency, and of Anne Pot. She espoused, first Ferry de Mailly, S. de Conty, and secondly Gaspard de Châtillon, count de Coligny, marshal of France. The marshal de Châtillon died in 1522.

‡ MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8549:

§ Ibid.

Montmorency so greatly on having attained, was the consent of the constable of Castille to deliver over the royal children and queen Eleanor on condition that a further sum of 40,000 crowns was paid as an indemnity for Duprat's base coinage, after he had detained the king and the highest dignitaries of France for upwards of two months on the frontier.

At length the forty-eight cases of crowns having been duly examined and sealed, preparations were made for the exchange. The same ceremonial was observed as at the release of Francis. A large barge was moored in the centre of the river Bidassoa; two French gentlemen and two Spanish cavaliers before the exchange took place crossed to either bank of the river, to examine and proclaim that no surprise was meditated by either nation on the other; and that neither the French nor the Spanish noblemen empowered to effect the exchange, wore other arms than a sword three feet long, and a poignard.* The gentlemen having satisfied themselves on these points, returned, and stationed themselves in the barge lying in the centre of the stream. Both parties then appeared on the banks of the river: queen Eleanor, with the dauphin and his brother, standing within sight, beneath a magnificent tent erected just outside the town of Fuenterrabia; Montmorency, the archbishop of Bourges, and the count de Tende, taking their station in front of the boat, which was laden with the cases of treasure. The dauphin and the marshal de Montmorency then simultaneously entered a boat. A brief delay then occurred; for queen Eleanor, before she quitted the Spanish territory, addressed the haughty constable of Castille, and publicly expressed her displeasure at the harsh treatment which the royal children had experienced, in order, says the chronicler, "to demonstrate the affection she felt for M. le dauphin and his brother, and her respect for and desire to espouse their father the king."† We know not with what demeanour Don Hernandez Velasco received this unexpected reprimand from the lips of the royal sister of his sovereign; but doubtless Eleanor was heartily weary of the vagaries, and fastidious punctilio displayed by her countrymen during the protracted negotiations.

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* Hilarion de Coste. Eloges des Enfans de France.

† Ibid.

It was between six and seven in the evening of Sunday, July 3rd, 1530, when the boats put off with their precious freights. In the one boat sat queen Eleanor, the two princes, the constable of Castille, and another Spanish nobleman; in the other was Montmorency with the treasure, accompanied by the archbishop of Bourges, and the count de Tende. The exchange took place in a few minutes, so great was the alacrity of the queen and the young princes to touch French ground. A most melodious burst of music greeted the princes and queen Eleanor on their landing; the rolling of drums, and the shrill notes of trumpets and clarions, mingled with shouts of welcome from the masses of people crowding down to the river's bank, and pressing round to gaze on their long absent princes. The marchioness of Nassau, grand mistress to queen Eleanor, and four-and-twenty young Spanish ladies, meanwhile, had been conveyed across the river, and surrounded the queen as she stepped into her litter. This litter was exceedingly splendid; it was composed of cloth of gold, embroidered *à l'antique* in a most sumptuous manner. The young princes mounted two palfreys, richly caparisoned, which were presented to them by the marshal de Montmorency; and placing themselves on each side of the litter occupied by queen Eleanor, the cavalcade proceeded to St. Jean de Luz. The progress of the royal party, however, was so frequently interrupted by the enthusiasm of the multitudes, that it grew quite dark long before the *cortège* reached St. Jean. Queen Eleanor then requested the princes to dismount and enter her litter, which they accordingly did. At about the distance of a mile from St. Jean, the procession was met by a deputation of five hundred of the chief inhabitants of the town, who each carried a flaming torch. Thus escorted, Eleanor and the princes entered St. Jean de Luz, where they spent the night.*

The marshal de Montmorency, meantime, despatched Montpezat to announce the approach of the queen and the princes to king Francis, who was sojourning with

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* De Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France. Vie de François de France, XV. dauphin de Viennois.

Madame at the castle of Toüars, a place about three miles from Bordeaux. The fatigue of the journey from Amboise had produced serious effects on the precarious health of the duchess d'Angoulême; and when Montpezat arrived with the joyous intelligence of the return of her grandchildren from captivity, Madame was confined to her bed.*

Leaving his mother at Toüars, the king departed during the evening of Monday, July 4th, and went by water to Langon, a town on the river Garonne. The following morning he proceeded to Bazas, and from thence to Rochefort de Marsan, where Francis determined to await the arrival of his bride and the princes. The king was accompanied by the king of Navarre, whose splendid equipage attracted universal admiration. Marguerite experienced great contentment that her husband was the favoured companion of the king: "Monseigneur," wrote she, in a letter to her brother, which he probably received during his sojourn at Rochefort, "as to the excuses you have been pleased to make relative to your retaining the king of Navarre, it is conferring so great an honour upon him, that I assure you, you could not bestow upon him a higher pleasure in this world than to ordain that he should remain near you, to render you service. As for myself, I feel only too happy, as I cannot be with you, that he should accompany you."† The king and his brother-in-law were attended by the cardinal chancellor Duprat, by the counts de Guise and de St. Paul, and by a multitude of ambassadors, prelates, and chamberlains. A hundred gentlemen-at-arms, arrayed in gorgeous uniforms of crimson satin and gold, their pennons borne before them by pages in rich liveries, escorted the sovereign, "so that it was an admirable sight to witness such order, for none of these noble cavaliers surpassed the other in splendour of attire, but all was so well and satisfactorily arranged that no fault could be found."‡

Queen Eleanor and the princes, meanwhile, quitted St. Jean de Luz, and made their entry into the town of Bayonne, on Tuesday the 5th of July. The greatest enthusiasm prevailed; the town being magnificently adorned for their reception. The streets were hung with tapestry; and over head an arcade of green boughs and arras sheltered the noble personages during their progress from the powerful rays of the sun. Triumphal arches, obelisks, and temples, were erected; in every street mummers exhibited their skill amidst the plaudits of the multitudes; and stages abounded, upon which whimsical comedies were performed, "so marvellously and ingeniously composed that before no son of man had heard or conceived such things; for the skill of the actors was so great that they might have been taken for nymphs descended from the Elysian Fields to grace these festivities."* Individuals grotesquely attired distributed medals and a coin called a "carolus" amongst the crowd, as soon as the procession had passed. Queen Eleanor rested for one night in the castle of Bayonne, and the following morning she continued her journey. At length, late on the third day after her entry into France, which was Wednesday, July 6th, a great discharge of artillery and the clash of martial instruments of music suddenly apprised Eleanor that the king, impatient to greet her and to embrace his children, had advanced to meet them from the little town of Captieux. The king was preceded by two hundred gentlemen of the chamber, and a notable array of noblemen and prelates followed. Queen Eleanor alighted from her litter as soon as she perceived the king; and taking the young princes by the hand, she advanced and presented them to their father. Francis dismounted from his horse and gracefully saluted the queen; then turning towards his children he clasped them in his arms, shedding tears of joy. The dauphin was greatly affected on beholding his father; but, recovering himself, he presently replied to the congratulations of the courtiers, who eagerly pressed round him, with a gravity and dignity beyond his years, and which filled every one with amazement. The young duke of Orleans, however, manifested his joy by clinging round his father's neck, capering about, and indulging in a thousand antics. Queen Eleanor then resumed her place in the litter; and with the king riding on horseback by her side, she arived after nightfall at the abbey of Captieux, a monastery of Urbanist monks, where her marriage with Francis was to be solemnized.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

† MS. Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl. Fran., No. 121.

‡ Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

The queen reposed for a few hours after her arrival at Captieux; but at midnight she rose to attire herself for the nuptial ceremony, which was performed at two o'clock in the morning in the abbey chapel, by the archbishop of Bourges, upon whom the pope had just conferred a cardinal's hat; assisted by the king's almoner, the bishop of Lisieux.* It had been stipulated by the emperor that his sister's marriage should be solemnized immediately after her first interview with the king, which must account for the strangeness of the hour selected by Francis for this ceremony. Having thus scrupulously performed his engagement, the king, though he surrounded Eleanor with every outward homage, manifested not the slightest affection for his new consort. The intense aversion felt by Francis for the emperor recoiled on everything belonging to Charles; and he had learned to regard his marriage with Eleanor as the most grievous of the penalties imposed by the treaty of Madrid. The queen's formal gravity wearied Francis; he contrasted the sprightly graces of his beautiful mistress, Mademoiselle de Heilly,† who was then at Toüars in attendance upon Madame, with the unbending dignity of Eleanor's deportment. Doubtless, however, the queen was wounded by the coldness and neglect which she experienced from Francis; and displeased that the king could so have forgotten propriety and consideration for her dignity as to nominate Mademoiselle de Heilly to be one of the noble ladies appointed to meet her on her entrance into France. Eleanor possessed not sufficient firmness of character to decline to admit Mademoiselle de Heilly to her presence, or to insist upon her dismissal from court. She had no influence with Francis; and her approbation and displeasure were subjects of utter indifference to the king, who from the first seldom saw the queen, except in the presence of the court. Thus abandoned by her husband, Eleanor sought counsel of the marshal de Montmorency, whose influence with his royal master was apparent; and during the first months after her arrival in France she was guided by his advice.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France. De Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

† Mademoiselle de Heilly at this period had not bestowed her hand on the duke d'Estampes. Her marriage took place in 1536.

From Capticux, meantime, Francis despatched a courier to Blois, to convey news of the safe arrival of his children to Marguerite. The king wrote to his sister in strains of the deepest affection: in relating to her his meeting with the young princes, he calls his sons "her children," and bids her rejoice at the prospect of so soon embracing them. Marguerite in reply to her brother, sends him fervent thanks for making her a participator in his joy: "As it has pleased you, monseigneur, to call your children mine, I will not disavow so signal an honour, for I feel a certainty that I can never love my own children, whom you term yours, so well."[*] In a letter which she despatched to Montmorency by the same courier, Marguerite desires to be humbly commended to the queen, and to Messieurs; and she bids the marshal assure them of her regret at not being able to see them as soon as she wished. "My messenger will tell you also how many joyful tears we shed on receiving this happy intelligence of their release. My sister de Vendôme[†] is staying here with me, and remains until after my *accouchement*, which event will happen when it pleases God."[‡]

Francis, meanwhile, conducted the queen to Bordeaux, where she made a magnificent entry into the city. The royal pair arrived by water from Langon. When about half way between that town and Bordeaux the royal barge anchored, and Francis took leave of the queen, and proceeded to visit Madame at Toüars, leaving Eleanor, according to regal etiquette, to make her entry into the city alone. The most sumptuous preparation had been made by the loyal Bordelais to receive their queen; and if the cheers and enthusiasm of her new subjects, and their eager desire to gaze upon her, could atone to Eleanor for the coldness manifested by her royal consort, consolation was now amply awarded her.

Early on Monday, the 11th of July, the day of the queen's entry into Bordeaux, the countess of Nevers,[§]

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[*] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl. Fran., No. 57.

[†] Françoise d'Alençon, duchess de Vendôme, sister of Marguerite's first husband the duke of Alençon.

[‡] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8546.

[§] Marie d'Albret, widow of Charles de Cleves, count de Nevers. This lady was of the royal House of Navarre, and daughter of Jean d'Albret, Sieur d'Orval, and of Charlotte de Bourgogne, countess de Rhetal.

accompanied by thirty-four noble French ladies, arrived to receive the queen, and to attend her throughout the solemnities of the day. Amongst these ladies were the duchess de la Tremouille,* the maréchale de la Marck,† the grand sénéchale of Normandy, Diane de Poitiers, Madame de Mirabeau, Mademoiselle de Heilly, and Mademoiselle de Riberac. The ladies of most illustrious rank were attired alike in robes of crimson velvet. The younger ladies were arrayed in crimson satin lined with velvet, their robes being very curiously embroidered with gold thread.‡

The countess de Nevers and her colleagues were entertained by the archbishop of Toulouse at a magnificent collation in the episcopal palace; and afterwards the countess summoned the cardinal de Tournon,§ the viscount de Turenne, and the lords of Humières, de la Roche, Beaucourt, and de Lude, to a conference, to regulate the ceremonial to be observed on their introduction to the queen. Whilst they were so engaged, the roar of artillery from the harbour announced that the royal galleys were approaching: the countess de Nevers immediately repaired to the pavilion erected on the banks of the Garonne, and entered the state barge in which she was to go down the river to meet the queen. The ships in the harbour were gaily decorated with flags and standards; all the bells in the town of Bordeaux rang merrily, and salutes of cannon continued at intervals to echo along the shore.||

It was about two o'clock in the afternoon when Madame de Nevers quitted Bordeaux. A band of music preceded

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* Louise de Coitivy, daughter of Charles de Coitivy, count de Taillebourg, and of Jeanne d'Orleans, only daughter of John, count d'Angoulême, and Marguerite de Rohan. She married Charles de la Tremouille, prince de Talmond, duke de Thouars and de la Tremouille. This lady was first cousin to king Francis.

† Françoise de Brezé, daughter of Louis de Brezé, count de Maulevrier, grand sénéchal of Normandy, and of the celebrated Diane de Poitiers. This lady married Robert de la Marck, duke de Bouillon, marshal of France.

‡ Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

§ François de Tournon, archbishop of Embrun, translated to the archiepiscopal see of Bourges, and created a cardinal in March, 1530.

|| Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

the barge, diffusing "most delicious harmony around." It was followed by a procession of more than four hundred galleys, boats, and vessels of every description. As the barge adorned with streamers and flags slowly floated down the river, the vessels following it suddenly commenced pouring forth salutes of artillery; and amidst the cheers of the crews, the *cortége* came to a halt. Madame de Nevers and the other ladies rose hastily, wondering what had happened: in a few minutes the king passed, on his way to Toüars. Francis gracefully saluted the ladies; then specially addressing himself to the countess de Nevers, he exclaimed: "*Allez, allez Madame, et faites bien votre devoir.*"*

At length the state galleys conveying queen Eleanor and her suite came in sight. A grand *feu de joie* was then fired by all the vessels on the river, which, we are told, resounded for leagues. The two vessels speedily came alongside of each other. The countess de Nevers was handed from her barge on to the deck of the queen's vessel by the duke de Guise and the count de St. Paul; and preceded by the grand master of the household—the marshal de Montmorency—she advanced towards the spot where queen Eleanor stood, accompanied by the dauphin and his brother.

The magnificence of Eleanor's attire on this occasion exceeded anything that had been before witnessed; she seemed literally overwhelmed beneath the weight of the gold and precious stones with which she was adorned. She wore a robe of crimson velvet, lined with white taffety, slashed and puffed on the sleeves and the skirt. The slashings were bordered by bands of jewels; the bottom of the robe and the queen's train were also decorated with gems. Her surcoat was of white satin, but so covered with stripes of pure silver that the satin appeared only at intervals. The surcoat was adorned in front with knots of gold cord, and bordered by strings of rubies, emeralds, and diamonds. The queen's hair floated loosely on her shoulders, confined only by a net of gold thread. The abundance of her hair was Eleanor's pre-eminent personal charm; and such was the luxuriance of her fair tresses, that we are told, they touched the ground. Eleanor wore a cap of crimson velvet, bordered with pearls, and ornamented by a small white plume. Her earrings were two diamonds, set transparently, each one of the size of a small nut; round her neck the queen wore a necklace of diamonds and rubies, which had been presented to her by the king as his nuptial gift. The centre jewel was a diamond of immense value, of the size, it is recorded, of a crown piece. Eleanor's fingers, moreover, were covered with jewels: one ruby ring which she wore was said to be of almost priceless worth, and had been presented by Louis XII. to Anne de Bretagne, who bequeathed it to her daughter, queen Claude. The queen's shoes were of black velvet; and she carried a feather fan in her hand. A little behind Eleanor stood her lady of honour, the countess of Nassau, attired in robes of black velvet, it being the custom for Spanish ladies of high rank to wear mourning when their husbands were absent on warlike expeditions; and the count de Nassau was at that time invested by his imperial master with a high command in Germany.*

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

Preceded by Montmorency, the countess de Nevers advanced before the queen and made three profound reverences. She then stooped to kiss the queen's hand; but Eleanor embraced the countess on both cheeks, and spoke to her in a most affable manner. Turning then towards the young princes, she presented them to the countess, saying with a smile: "*Voyez, ma cousine, si ces mignons sont empirés en Espagne!*" After Madame de Nevers had made a suitable reply, the queen requested her to present the other ladies, all of whom she cordially embraced. The word of command was then given for the galleys to steer into the port of Bordeaux. During the way the queen conversed alternately in French and Spanish, with a condescension which enchanted everybody. At the landing place a splendid pavilion was erected, beneath which a group of noblemen stood to receive the queen; and amongst whom was the cardinal chancellor. As soon as Eleanor quitted the vessel, a salute from thirty-three cannons, twenty-four fauconets, and thirty-two culverins signified the event to the more distant quarters of the city. The firing continued without intermission for upwards of an hour; and so great was the uproar, what with the pealing of bells and the shouts of the populace, that even the thunder of heaven itself, we are told, would not have been heard.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

On leaving the barge, the queen entered the pavilion, and placed herself beneath a canopy of state to receive the address of the municipality of Bordeaux. Madame de Nevers stood on her right hand, and supported her majesty's train, for the functions of the countess de Nassau were superseded after the arrival of the ladies of Eleanor's household, as queen of France. The queen returned a gracious reply to the address of the provost of Bordeaux, and was also pleased to accept the present offered to her by the authorities of the city. This was a model, in fine gold, of a ship filled with gold crowns.* The queen then entered her litter, and the procession moved towards the cathedral. First marched the different trades and guilds with banners and emblems; the archers and the town sergeants following, playing merrily on flutes and drums. Next rode the archbishop of Toulouse, between the bishops of Condom and Saintes, followed by a train of ecclesiastics. The provost of Bordeaux appeared next, immediately preceding the captain of the king's Swiss guards, who was attended by three hundred soldiers of his band. Then came a very full band of musicians "playing most delectably." Next marched the parliament of Bordeaux, the members clad in their robes of ceremony. A group of noblemen followed, carrying their wands of office. Then came the Venetian ambassador, riding between the count d'Eu and the duke de Longueville; the papal nuncio, and the duke de Vendôme, the duke de Guise, and the English ambassador. These noble personages were followed by the duke de Nemours and the count de St. Paul. Afterwards came the cardinals de Tournon and de Lorraine, riding immediately before the papal legate in ordinary, the cardinal chancellor Duprat,† who rode alone. Then came the dauphin and the duke of Orleans, surrounded by a hundred gentlemen of the chamber. Next came the queen's majesty. Eleanor sat in an open litter "so that all men might reverently gaze upon her;" the litter was surrounded by a hundred gentlemen at arms, with their battle-axes raised. The countess de Nassau and Madame de Nevers rode close to the queen's litter. The other princesses followed, riding two and two; the French ladies mounted on palfreys, and the Spanish ladies on mules. The procession was closed by the archers of the king's guard, armed with halberds.*

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

† Duprat cardinal de Sens, et de Ste. Praxede, had just been nominated legate à latere in France, by pope Clement VII.

The streets were sumptuously decorated from the Palais to the cathedral; the objects which attracted most attention were three large stages, or theatres, upon which actors performed comedies, of edifying import. The front of each of these theatres was adorned with the armorial bearings of members of the royal family, surrounded by an inscription. Eleanor's attention was especially attracted by these devices; and she caused the procession to halt several times that she might leisurely gaze upon them. The first theatre was resplendent with the arms of the king, the dauphin, and the duke d'Orleans. The legend round the arms of Francis contained a warmer greeting to Eleanor than any she had yet received personally from her royal spouse, it was,—"*Veni sponsa mea, veni de Libano et coronaberis.*" The motto surrounding the armorial bearings of the princes was—"*Timete Dominum filii mei, et Regem honorate.*" The second stage was adorned with the effigies of the queen, of Madame, and of the queen of Navarre. This theatre presented a most superb sight, we are told, from the ingenuity of its decorations. The armorial bearings of the princesses were blazoned over their effigies. The motto surrounding the arms of the queen was,—"*Filia, inclina aurem tuam obliuiscere domum patris tui.*" That addressed to Madame was,—"*Manent immota tuorum fata tibi.*" The loyal Bordelais caused Marguerite to exclaim: "*Ego regina Jouisque soror, ac Palladis filia!*"†

After the conclusion of the religious ceremony in the cathedral, queen Eleanor was conducted to the hotel of the first president of the parliament of Bordeaux, where lodgings were prepared for her. It was then very late; for the queen made her entry into the city at four o'clock in the afternoon. After conversing with her majesty for some little time, Madame de Nevers took leave, to conduct the young princes to Toüars to visit Madame, whose impatience was extreme to embrace her grandchildren. Late during the same night, Francis, leaving his children at Toüars, returned to Bordeaux, and took up his abode with the queen in the hotel of the first president.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

† Ibid.

On the following morning, the king, anxious to present Eleanor to his mother, conducted her to Toüars. Madame was still exceedingly indisposed, and unable to bear fatigue or excitement. She however attired herself sumptuously to receive Eleanor; and as soon as she was informed of her approach, she insisted on rising, supported by one of her ladies, from the couch on which she reposed. Madame advanced to the door of her chamber to meet the queen. Eleanor inclined profoundly before the redoubtable mother of king Francis; and with great humility, stooped to kiss her hand. Madame, however, would not accept this homage, but with very gracious demeanour she kissed the lips of her new daughter, and taking her by the hand, led her, followed by the king, to the couch from which she had risen, and close to which a chair had been placed for the queen. The duchess, with her son's assistance, then resumed her recumbent position; but presently the better to converse with the queen, she caused a large pillow to be brought and placed so that she might recline nearly in a sitting posture. The interview lasted for some time, when the king and queen took leave of Madame, and returned to Bordeaux.*

The queen of Navarre resorted to various devices to vary the monotony of her residence at Blois. Her correspondence at this period was incessant; indeed Marguerite must have lived with a pen in her hand almost at all times. She writes frequently to Montmorency to prefer a variety of petitions; for the marshal, as grand master of the household, disposed of every office in his department. Marguerite's petitioners were numerous, and of every rank in life. During the sojourn of the marshal in the south, the queen wrote to request the following

* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

140788

appointments:—A post in the household of the dauphin for the grandson of Monsieur de Villene;* the office of controller of the gold and silver plate belonging to queen Eleanor for Marc Marchant, who held the same post in the household of the deceased queen; the post of furrier to queen Eleanor for her faithful servant Brodeau,† who had served in the same capacity the deceased queens Anne and Claude; the appointment of Charles Mesnager, as silversmith in ordinary to queen Eleanor. Marguerite, moreover, solicited that a valet-de-chambre, late in the service of the dauphin, might be reinstated in his post; as he had been prevented by an attack of fever from accompanying the princes into Spain: she asks also, that one Pierre Binet may be retained again as treasurer to the princes. She indites a long letter to pray that the butler and pantler of the princes before their departure into Spain may be re-established: "also," continues the queen, "I have heard that Jehánne la Raye his wife, who washed the table linen of the late queen Claude, (whom God assoilize) wishes to enter the household of queen Eleanor in the same capacity."‡ Marguerite earnestly supplicates Montmorency so to decree. The queen also solicits that the post of chief watchman of Paris may be bestowed on her gentleman of the chamber, Monsieur de Gonez, who greatly desired the appointment.

Marguerite also took great delight in superintending the formation of the new gardens at Blois, which the king was constructing at an immense expense. At length, about the 16th of July, Marguerite was safely delivered of a prince. Louise de Toirviron, the queen's principal midwife, immediately wrote to announce the happy news to Madame, who was still sojourning at the castle of Toüars. The letter describes Marguerite's employments on the day preceding her *accouchement:* it is as follows:—

LOUISE DE TOIRVIRON TO MADAME.§

"Madame,—This letter is to inform you that the queen your daughter was slightly indisposed yesterday, but was well enough to attend vespers in the evening, in the church of St. Calais; afterwards she walked for some time in the gardens; she then supped very heartily, and retired to bed about nine o'clock. About one o'clock her illness increased, and at three in the morning, she gave birth to a prince.* I assure you, madame, that by God's blessing, both the queen and her little son are as well as can be. I beseech God, Madame, to give you a long and prosperous life. Written at Blois, Friday, at three hours past midnight.

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* Jean de Brinon, S. de Villaines, chancellor of the duchy of Alençon.

† Victor Brodeau, valet-de-chambre to king Francis, and under secretary to Marguerite.

‡ MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8549. § Ibid. No. 8595.

"Your very humble and very obedient subject and servant,

"L. DE TOIRVIRON."

The king and queen were at Angoulême when intelligence reached them of the *accouchement* of Marguerite. Francis was transported with joy; he despatched a courier to bear his congratulations to Marguerite, and published an edict bestowing upon his sister and her husband the privilege of creating a freeman in every guild throughout the realm, "in order to manifest to my very dear and beloved brother-in-law, the king of Navarre, and to our sister, his consort, the joy we feel at the birth of our very dear and beloved nephew, John, prince of Navarre."* The little prince was privately baptized; and a few days afterwards he was committed to the care of Madame de Silly, to be reared at the castle of Lonray, with his sister the princess Jeanne.

Marguerite's recovery was rapid; and corresponded with her eager desire to be well by the time the king arrived at Blois, that she might accompany the court to Fontainebleau. Francis was conducting the queen to visit all his royal palaces in succession; and seemed to take pride in displaying the wealth and magnificence of his court to the sister of Charles V.

The king arrived at Blois early in August; it appears also that the health of Madame had improved enough to enable her to undertake the journey thither from Toüars, as queen Marguerite, in a letter to the king, speaks of her mother as being with her, and earnestly desiring his presence. After sojourning at Blois for a few days, the court removed to Fontainebleau, a palace which Madame liked better than any of the other royal residences of France, because she found the air there most salubrious.

Madame de Montmorency, meantime, had presented her husband with an heir* to his proud titles; and as soon as she was able to travel, she journeyed to pay her respects to the queen at Fontainebleau, where Francis held his court with great splendour for some months. Marguerite wrote warm congratulations on this event to the marshal; for Montmorency was still detained by the Spanish deputies at Bayonne, who seem to have been very backward in tendering receipts for the large ransom they had received. Her own health, Marguerite stated, was improving; but she relates that she retarded her recovery by standing, one day, longer than it was advisable, in conversation with the countess de Nassau, who was yet in attendance on her late royal mistress.† Probably Eleanor manifested great unwillingness to part with her Spanish attendants, whose departure would leave her almost friendless in the midst of a court where the name of the emperor her brother was execrated, and where all the calamity which afflicted France was ascribed to his faithless policy. It had been ardently hoped, at one time, that the queen's influence might induce the king to break off his *liaison* with Mademoiselle de Heilly. But the stipulation made by the emperor in the treaty of Cambray, that the duchy of Burgundy should be inherited by any children which might be born to Eleanor, to the prejudice of the king's elder sons, added to the artful insinuations of Mademoiselle de Heilly, that Charles had accomplished the union of his sister with the king in order to have a trusty spy at the court of France, alienated Francis more and more from his queen. It must also have been painful for Eleanor to witness the national poverty, and the dearth of money which ensued after the payment of the ransom of the princes,—calamities openly laid to the charge of the emperor; for it was impossible that she could refrain from associating herself, in some degree, with the popular obloquy under which her House had fallen. The king's privy purse had likewise suffered to a serious extent; as all the sums expended on the queen's sumptuous entry into the kingdom were defrayed by Francis. The buildings at Fontainebleau were in consequence suspended for want of funds; this was a privation beyond the fortitude of Francis to submit to, for these "buildings" were his especial delight. He therefore issued an order commanding a great sale of timber to the amount of 100,000l. in his forest of Fontainebleau, to be proceeded with most expeditiously: "Nevertheless," adds the king, "not to lose time, and that my buildings may not be retarded, it is my will that the provost of Paris and others take counsel together, and find some merchant who will be willing, on the faith of my commission authorizing the sale of timber, to advance a sufficient sum of money without delay for my said buildings."* These, the favourite "buildings" of the king at Fontainebleau, were on a most extensive scale. The works were confided to the famous painter Primaticcio, who furnished many of the architectural designs, besides contributing by his pencil to the embellishment of the interior of the palace. It was to defray part of the expenses for the construction of the Cour Ovale, and the magnificent château du Donjon, that Francis commanded this sale of timber at Fontainebleau. The *galerie*, now called that of François I., was likewise in progress. This splendid gallery is 180 feet long and eighteen in width; the ceiling was painted in *fresco* by Il Rosso, whom Francis greatly favoured, and the artist has there represented, under mythological guise, some of the chief events in the life of the king. This noble apartment led to another, the favoured retreat of Francis and his gifted sister, and one in which they passed many delightful hours together. It was here Francis placed the library which he had collected with such care and expense: books purchased from every city in Europe thronged his cabinets; rare manuscripts also were there treasured; some brought from the East by the Greek *savants*, who found so cordial a welcome in France; others, gorgeous with rich blazonry, developed the gradual progress of art in elegance of design and colour, and in exquisite finish. The two most beautiful illuminated manuscripts of the age, "Les Heures de la Reine Anne de Bretagne," and the "Livre des Tournois du roi Réné," were included in the king's collection. A poet himself, Francis delighted in the chivalrous ballads of the middle ages, and in the lays of the *trouvère;* the imagery of the southern poets, clothed in the harmonious cadence of the ancient Provençal dialect, afforded him unceasing pleasure. With Marguerite sitting by his side, and surrounded by everything that was beautiful in sculpture, painting, and carving in precious metals, Francis here admitted to audience the learned men and artists whom his munificent patronage encouraged. One day Budée delivered before the illustrious pair some eloquent and learned oration on the literature of Greece or Rome; or Guillaume Petit, bishop of Senlis, the intimate friend of Erasmus, read aloud the works of that great theologian; another day Benvenuto Cellini would present himself to submit the marvellous produce of his chisel; or Leonardo de Vinci, to lay at the feet of his royal patrons the portrait of one of those Madonnas, with golden tresses and pensive features, which his pencil so often reproduced. Marguerite excelled in needlework of every description; and during these *séances* her fingers were busily employed in tapestry work; or in embroidering from some graceful design furnished her by the artists whom her brother had summoned to France, to improve and superintend the silk fabrics of his loyal city of Lyons.

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* Ordonnances de François I., t. ii. Archives Judiciares.

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* The eldest son of the constable de Montmorency was born at Chantilly in July, 1530.

† Lettre de la Reine de Navarre au maréchal de Montmorency. MSS. Bibl. Roy., F. Béth., No. 8550.

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* Lettre du roi au grand maître de Montmorency. MSS. de Béth., No. 8564, Bibl. Roy. This letter is published by Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

But duty soon summoned Marguerite from the splendours and intellectual enjoyments of her brother's court. The little prince of Navarre, despite the care of his faithful *gouvernante,* Madame de Silly, seemed gradually wasting away, without suffering from any malady which the physicians could detect. Late in the autumn of the year 1530, therefore, Marguerite and her husband took leave of the king, and removed to their castle of Alençon, which was about three miles distant from Lonray, where the young prince and princess of Navarre resided. Marguerite found her little son in a very weakly condition, and presenting a painful contrast to his sister the princess Jeanne, who was a robust and merry child of nearly three years old. The precarious state of her infant proved a great affliction to the queen, and her letters at this period are written in a most desponding tone. Her own health soon began to suffer from anxiety, increased by the bad news which she constantly received of Madame's condition.

The queen, amid these chagrins, solaced herself in laying out the gardens and embellishing the park attached to the castle of Alençon. The site of Marguerite's garden at Alençon, we are told, was very beautiful; it was planted with groves of evergreens and fragrant shrubs, "so that in summer it resembled a terrestrial paradise," all which trees and flowers she caused to be tended with the greatest care. Probably her infant, also, was brought from Lonray to be under her watchful eye. Nevertheless, despite the care lavished upon him, and the treatment of the learned maître Jehan Goinret, the little prince drooped, and expired on Christmas Day, 1530, at the age of five months and a-half. It was a melancholy close of the year for Marguerite, and her grief was vehement. The queen took an affecting way of apprising her subjects of Alençon of the loss she had sustained, and of her resignation to the dispensations of Providence. She commanded placards to be posted in the principal quarters of the town announcing the sorrowful event. Beneath were these words:—"Dieu l'avoit donné, Dieu l'a osté!"[*] The little prince was interred in the mausoleum of the dukes d'Alençon at the church of the Holy Virgin in Alençon, on the day following his decease. After the funeral obsequies terminated, the queen caused a solemn *Te Deum* to be chanted, in thanksgiving for her infant's happy release from the world.[†] She then wrote the following letter to her brother:—

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO THE KING.[‡]

"Monseigneur,—As it has pleased God to take to Himself him whom you acknowledged as your own little son, and whom you honoured so greatly as to rejoice with me at his birth, I write—in the fear that you and Madame may be deeply grieved at this sorrowful event—to beseech you both rather to rejoice at the glory to which he has been translated than to bewail his departure. If it pleases God to preserve you both in good health, I will try to bear all other earthly tribulations patiently; for, monseigneur, the king of Navarre and myself are content to submit to the will of Him who can, if it pleases Him, give us many more children to serve you, and Messieurs your children. To your good favour and affection, monseigneur, we very humbly commend ourselves; and beseeching you to pardon me for not having written to you sooner, and more in detail, I remain

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[*] Oraison Funèbre de Marguerite, par Charles de Ste. Marthe.

[†] Ibid.

[‡] MS. de Béth., No. 8624, Bibl. Roy.

"Your very humble and very obedient sister and subject,

"MARGUERITE."

Ever sensitive of the afflictions and vicissitudes which befel his sister, Francis hastened to console her. The duchess d'Angoulême was too ill to be informed of her daughter's loss; but the king sent the bishop of Bayonne* to Alençon, to condole with Marguerite, and to deliver this letter:—

KING FRANCIS TO HIS SISTER THE QUEEN OF NAVARRE.†

"If Fortune, *ma mignonne*, had not for many long years made trial of our fortitude, I should applaud her for seeking fresh proof of her power over us; but, knowing from long experience that all things belonging to me are yours, she ought to have divined that what is yours is also mine. Therefore, if you endured grief for the loss of my children, which were yours also, and the first children belonging to you deceased, it is my turn now to bear this sorrow. Rebel not, therefore, and do not cease to combat misfortune, our old and persevering foe; but think that this is the third child of yours, and the last of mine, whom God has called to join the glorious company above—a consummation attained by them with little toil; but one which we ourselves are still earnestly labouring to achieve. Wipe away, therefore, your bitter tears; render obedience to God—and give proof of your accustomed fortitude by applying to this, your own case, the pure and wholesome counsel which, under similar adversity, you tendered to me. By thus doing, instead of fruitlessly lamenting this grievous death, you will render your company very agreeable to us and to our mother; who, with her gout and her accustomed sorrows, seems at this moment to be unconsciously celebrating in her own body the obsequies of her offspring. If you rejoice, therefore, only in the comfort you are conferring on your friends, you will console her in the midst of her heavy affliction, and will bestow on your brother a joy—the plenitude of which you alone are capable of appreciating."

The bishop of Bayonne was, moreover, instructed by the king to press for Marguerite's immediate departure for St. Germain, where the court was sojourning. But the affliction which had recently befallen her greatly affected the queen's health and spirits; and she felt, as yet, unable to travel; or when arrived at court to partake in the excitement caused by the preparations then going forwards for the approaching coronation of queen Eleanor at St. Denis. In reply to Montmorency's letter of condolence on her loss, Marguerite wrote:—"Mon nepveu, your letter, I assure you, gave me as much consolation as any I have received. You have aided me to bear the burden of grief, which, without the help of God, I should have found more grievous than I thought. I was very glad to hear of your return to court; and I beg you to believe that however short your distance may be from it, your absence is felt there all the same. We will not fail to follow your advice, and quit this place* as soon as we can; for since we have been here, although the king of Navarre finds himself in good health, I have been so indisposed and feeble that it will be a great effort to me to travel. Believe, however, that I feel marvellous concern at being so far from Madame, when I know that she continues to suffer so seriously; and I shall never be at ease until I rejoin her. I beg that my recent affliction may not be mentioned to her until after my arrival. You may say to her, however, that since my abode in this place I have been much indisposed, but that I shall quit it without delay."†

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* Jean du Bellay.

† MSS. de Béth., No. 8624, Bibl. Roy.

The king and queen of Navarre probably arrived at St. Germain some time during the month of February, 1531. It was a great effort for Marguerite to depart from her mournful residence at Alençon, to enter on the splendid festivities of her brother's court, at which all the great and illustrious of the kingdom were congregated, to attend the queen at her coronation: Marguerite, nevertheless, was compelled to put restraint on her feelings; and take her place in the festivals and pageants with which this event was celebrated.

It had been ordained by Francis that the grand tournament to be holden in Paris in the queen's honour, should precede the ceremonies of her coronation and entry into the capital. The king and queen, therefore, accompanied by Marguerite and her husband, removed from St. Germain to the Louvre on the 15th day of February. The lists were erected in the grand quadrangle before the Palais des Tournelles; and tournaments were held for three successive days. Eleanor rode each day in state from the Louvre to the Tournelles, seated in an open litter, accompanied by the king's daughters, the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite. The jousts were opened by the dauphin and his band of twenty gentlemen, appareled in his colours of grey, white, and violet. All the cavaliers of the dauphin's band demeaned themselves most valiantly; but the youthful heir of France especially distinguished himself, and ran a course with a spear, showing princely courage and address.* The queen, on the termination of the tournament, returned to St. Germain-en-Laye, and reposed there until the 3rd day of March, when she departed for St. Denis, as was customary, to spend the eve of her coronation in the episcopal palace, and to perform a midnight vigil before the high altar, in the cathedral church. She was accompanied by Madame, who had partially recovered her health; by the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite, the queen of Navarre, and by the duchesses de Vendôme,† de Lorraine,‡ de Nemours,§ and de Guise,|| and by the countess de Nevers.¶

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* Alençon.

† MSS. de Béth., No. 8549, Bibl. Royale.

The most elaborate preparation, meanwhile, had been made in the venerable abbey church for the august ceremony. All the preparations had been intrusted to the grand-master de Montmorency. Over against the high altar a theatre was erected, nine feet high, and twenty-eight feet long, having thirteen steps ascending to it. In the centre of this stage was a small haut-dais, about a foot high, for the throne and praying-desk of the queen. The whole of this platform was sumptuously draped with blue velvet, powdered with fleurs-de-lis in gold embroidery. At the right of the haut-dais, on the lower theatre, stood a very rich chair, covered with cloth of gold for Madame;

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

† Françoise d'Alençon, sister of Marguerite's first husband, the duke d'Alençon.

‡ Renée de Bourbon, sister of the constable de Bourbon, consort of duke Antoine II. of Lorraine.

§ Charlotte d'Orleans, daughter of the duke de Longueville, consort of Philip, duke de Nemours, the brother of Madame.

|| Antoinette de Bourbon, daughter of Francis, count de Vendôme, consort of Claude, duke de Guise.

¶ Marie d'Albret.

at a little distance from the chair were seats magnificently garnished for the princess Marguerite, the princess Isabel of Navarre, the duchess dowager of Vendôme,* the duchess de Nemours, and Mademoiselle de Vendôme.† On the left side of the throne similar seats were placed for Madame Madelaine, eldest daughter of the king, the queen of Navarre, the duchesses de Vendôme, de Lorraine, and de Guise, and for the countess de Nevers. Galleries were erected on the right and on the left of the principal theatre, adorned with the richest tapestries, for the princes, prelates, ambassadors, and great officers of state present. A little gallery was also constructed to the left, on descending the steps of the royal platform, for the ladies whose office it was to present the offerings to the princesses chosen to bear them before the queen. The choir of the cathedral was hung with crimson velvet, powdered with golden fleurs-de-lis. On the right of the altar stood a chair of state of cloth of gold, for the cardinal chancellor Duprat, papal legate in ordinary, and behind were placed seats for the cardinals and bishops taking part in the ceremony. Close to the chair of the cardinal Duprat stood a table covered with violet velvet, upon which sparkled the regalia; on the left of the altar another table was placed for the queen's offerings, in front of which was a chair of crimson velvet embroidered with gold, for the officiating prelate, the cardinal de Bourbon. In front of the haut-dais, to the left, so as not to impede Eleanor's progress to the altar, stood a smaller chair of cloth of gold, for the mistress of the robes to the queen, the maréchale de Châtillon, the widowed sister of the marshal de Montmorency.‡

Everything being thus prepared, the queen was conducted in great state to the cathedral, at eleven o'clock in the forenoon of Sunday, the 5th day of March, 1531,§ in the following order:—First marched a hundred Swiss guards, and two hundred gentlemen of the king's household. The knights of the order of St. Michael followed; then a train of gentlemen ushers, bearing their golden maces. The princes walked next in procession; the assemblage surpassed any previously witnessed at the coronation of a queen. Then walked the marshal de Montmorency alone, bearing his wand of office as grand master of the household: this wand was exceedingly rich, and ornamented with the marshal's device—a gold peacock with expanded tail, dazzling with gems. Next appeared the queen, supported by the cardinals de Grammont and de Tournon. Eleanor's dress was exceedingly superb, and was, as usual, studded with jewels, for which the queen seems to have had an immoderate passion. Her dress was of white satin, adorned with precious stones; her surcoat was furred with ermine, and embroidered with golden fleurs-de-lis, between each row of which was a string of large pearls, mingled with diamonds and emeralds. On her head was a small diadem, set with very rich gems. She wore also a robe of blue velvet, lined with ermine, and embroidered with fleurs-de-lis. The value of the jewels worn by queen Eleanor was estimated at more than a million of golden crowns. The dauphin and his brother, the duke of Orleans, bore the lappets of the queen's robe; and the train of this regal mantle, which was full twelve yards long, was borne by three princesses of the blood—the duchesses de Vendôme, de Lorraine, and de Nemours. A nobleman marched after each of these royal dames, supporting her train, which was six yards long. Next walked Madame, attired in a black velvet robe, her surcoat furred with ermine, but wearing no jewels, in accordance with the custom that forbad their use to widows. The train of her mantle of dark violet velvet was borne by the counts de Laval and de Chateaubriand. Then came the queen of Navarre, who walked between her young nieces, daughters of the king—the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite. Queen Marguerite wore a royal crown, very richly adorned with precious stones; her surcoat was furred with ermine, and ornamented with costly gems. She wore a long regal mantle, lined with ermine, and powdered with fleurs-de-lis in gold embroidery, and her train was carried breast-high by the count de Candale and the count de Roussy. The young princesses wore jewelled circlets, and their royal mantles were borne by noblemen. The princess Isabel of Navarre followed, walking with Marie de Luxembourg, duchess dowager of Vendôme; next came the duchess de Guise, and Mademoiselle de Vendôme. The last of this royal procession, which was confined to princesses of the blood, marched in virtue of her office, the mistress of the robes to queen Eleanor, the maréchale de Châtillon, arrayed in black velvet and wearing her robe of state as a peeress.

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* Marie de Luxembourg, countess de St. Paul.

† Marie de Vendôme, eldest daughter of Charles, duke de Vendôme, and of Françoise d'Alençon. This princess was betrothed to James V., king of Scotland, who abandoned her to espouse the beautiful princess Madelaine of France, daughter of the king. Mademoiselle de Vendôme died unmarried, in the year 1538, soon after the marriage of her sister Marguerite with Francis, duke de Nevers.

‡ Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

§ Menin,—Coronations of France.

The queen advanced to the high altar and prostrated herself before it. The assemblage of prelates waiting to receive her majesty presented a most imposing spectacle. In front of the altar stood the cardinal de Bourbon, arrayed in full pontificals, and wearing his mitre, supported by three archbishops; and behind the cardinal, a little to the left, was a group of twenty-eight prelates. On his right sate Duprat, cardinal and legate in solemn state, in his chair of cloth of gold. All the relics and shrines from the treasury of St. Denis were displayed on the high altar, which blazed with the light of tapers and the radiance of the precious gems that adorned it. When the queen concluded her private devotions, the cardinal de Bourbon advanced and presented to her a reliquary from the altar. Eleanor reverently kissed it, and then, conducted by the cardinals de Grammont and de Tournon, and preceded by the grand master of the household, she ascended the haut-dais and took her place on the throne. The cardinals afterwards descended again from the platform, and seated themselves near the legate.

A silence of some minutes ensued, all remaining in their places. The cardinals then returned to the platform to escort the queen to the altar for the ceremony of her coronation. Eleanor knelt before the altar on a cushion of cloth of gold. The prayers used before the anointing were recited by the cardinal de Bourbon, assisted by the archbishops of Toulouse and Lyons. During this interval the marshal de Montmorency ascended the dais to attend to the altar Madame, the princess Madelaine, and the queen of Navarre, whose services were required to prepare the queen to receive the sacred unction. The duchess d'Angoulême lifted the crown from the queen's head, and Marguerite opened Eleanor's surcoat at the bosom. The ceremony of anointing was performed by the cardinal de Bourbon. The ring, sceptre, and hand of justice, were then separately delivered to Eleanor, with the appointed exhortation by different prelates, the queen of Navarre standing throughout this ceremony on her left hand, and Madame on her right. The bishop of Lisieux, high almoner of France, then took the great crown from the altar, and presented it to the officiating cardinal, who placed it on Eleanor's head, saying: "Take the crown of glory, honour, and delight, that thou mayest shine with lustre, and be crowned with eternal exaltation through our Lord Jesus Christ." This crown was that made for Jeanne d'Evreux, consort of Charles IV., and always used at the coronation of the queen, as that of Charlemagne was at the crowning of the king of France. It was of pure gold, set with rubies, sapphires, and oriental pearls. Its weight, however, rendered it intolerable to wear; and during the coronation prayers the crown was supported on Eleanor's head by the dauphin and the duke of Orleans. It was then lifted from the queen's head by the dauphin, who delivered it to the grand chamberlain, the duke de Longueville; then, aided by the duke of Orleans, he replaced it by a smaller crown, which was taken from the altar and presented to the prince by the bishop of Bayonne.* Arrayed in full regal splendour, queen Eleanor returned to her throne, the duke de Longueville bearing before her the crown of Jeanne d'Evreux, which he placed on a cushion covered with cloth of gold in front of the haut-dais. The duke, as high chamberlain, then placed himself on his knees before the cushion. The queen then delivered the sceptre to the count de St. Paul,† who received it kneeling, on the right of the throne; and the hand of justice to the duke de Guise, who supported it also, during the remainder of the ceremony, in the same attitude.

High mass then commenced, when the maréchale de Châtillon rose and delivered the queen's horary and prayer-book to mademoiselle de Vendôme and the countess de Nevers, who presented them to Eleanor. After making three profound reverences, the princesses returned to their seats. The Holy Gospel was next carried by the cardinal de Grammont for the queen to kiss. The royal offerings were then delivered by Madame de Châtillon to the four ladies whose duty it was to present them to the princesses who were to accompany the queen to the altar. The maréchale de Montmorency presented the loaf of gold to the princess Marguerite of France, and the silver loaf to the princess Isabel of Navarre. The consort of the admiral de Brion* presented the wine in two small casks of silver gilt to the dowager duchess of Vendôme; and the grande sénéchale of Normandy Diane de Poitiers, delivered the wax-taper, garnished with fourteen pieces of gold, to the duchess de Guise. Preceded by the princesses bearing the offerings on cushions of white damask fringed with gold, the queen approached the altar, and kneeling, presented them to the officiating cardinal. It must be observed, that every time the queen rose from her chair of state, Madame, the queen of Navarre, and all the princesses of the blood, did so likewise, making a profound reverence to her majesty. Eleanor afterwards received the Holy Communion; she was next once more solemnly enthroned. The cardinal Duprat then rose, and followed by all the archbishops and bishops present, advanced to the front of the altar. He then, as papal legate, bestowed a solemn benediction and full absolution on all who had assisted at the august ceremony.† Eleanor then descended from her throne, and preceded by the princes bearing the regalia, quitted the cathedral in the same state that she had entered it. Largesse was made to the people, and multitudes of coronation medals were distributed.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

† Son of Charles, duke de Vendôme.

Thus ended one of the most gorgeous coronations ever witnessed in France. The Imperial ambassadors were present, and beheld the honours conferred on their sovereign's sister, as were, likewise, twelve of Eleanor's

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* François de Long-vic, dame de Paigny, daughter of Jean, sieur de Givry, and Jeanne, natural daughter of Charles, count d'Angoulême, father of the king.

† Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France. Menin,—Coronations of the kings of France.

Spanish maids of honour, though no conspicuous part in the ceremonial was awarded to them. Six of these ladies departed to their own country on the termination of the festivities.

But the fatiguing ceremonies which inaugurated Eleanor's accession to the throne of France, were not concluded with her coronation at St. Denis. She had yet her solemn entry into Paris to make; and to honour the ancient municipality of the capital by partaking of a grand banquet at the Hotel de Ville. The queen took her departure from St. Denis on Wednesday the 8th day of March, and journeyed, attended by all the illustrious persons present at her coronation, to the priory of St. Lazare in the Faubourg St. Denis, where it was customary for the sovereigns of France to spend the night, previous to their entry into Paris. The weather, however, was so inclement, and such torrents of rain fell, that it was deemed expedient to delay the pageant until a more genial season; consequently Eleanor quitted St. Lazare, and took up her residence with the king, Madame, and the king and queen of Navarre, in the Louvre, where she remained until Friday, the 10th of March. The weather having then cleared, Eleanor returned to St. Lazare. About twelve o'clock at noon she took her place on a temporary balcony, surmounted by a magnificent canopy, erected in front of the monastery, to witness the defiling of the cavalcade which was to precede her litter. Eleanor sate in a chair covered with blue velvet, spangled with fleurs-de-lis. On one side of the queen stood Madame; on the other queen Marguerite and the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite. The cardinal chancellor Duprat placed himself a little in advance of the throne to reply in her majesty's name to the city addresses which were to be presented by the provost of Paris Delabarre, and others. In front of the royal balcony stood the grand master of the household, bearing aloft his baton of office richly blazoned, as at the coronation, with the device and cognizance of Montmorency.*

The religious orders, the university, and the Sorbonne first defiled in procession; then marched a thousand men-at-arms, very richly arrayed in the colours of the queen, which were black, white, and yellow. Next came a procession of the children of the principal citizens of Paris, riding horses very richly caparisoned, and wearing velvet caps. Afterwards walked the town sergeants, the city officers, the archers of Paris, and the heads of the municipality, immediately preceding the governor of Paris, Delabarre, who was "very richly attired and rode, having the provost of the merchants on his right hand." Then followed a countless throng of deputations from the various trade unions of the kingdom, displaying flags and banners. Next followed in array the members of the legal courts of the realm, both civil and criminal; the judges, the attorney-general, the solicitor-general, the masters of requests, the counsellors, the secretaries, and ushers. The officers of the salt magazines of the realm walked after these; then the members of the Cour-des-Aides, and of the Chambre-des-Comptes; with the staff of officers and notaries attached. Then appeared in great magnificence the parliament of Paris, its members marching two and two, clad in scarlet robes furred with ermine, headed by their presidents.

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* Godefroy,—Grand. Cérém.

As each deputation approached the balcony where Eleanor sat in royal state, its chief personage quitted his station and ascended the steps of the throne to present the harangue to her majesty. When the parliament of Paris appeared, the spectacle was most imposing; the members, in their splendid robes, surrounded the platform upon which the queen's throne stood, whilst their first president, de Selve, approached Eleanor with a humble obeisance, and very eloquently congratulated her majesty on her auspicious arrival in France. The most brilliant *coup d'œil* was presented from the royal platform by the processions defiling towards the Porte St. Denis after making their obeisance to the queen. The gorgeous flags and ensigns of every colour and texture displayed by the retreating multitudes, the magnificence of the costumes, and the enthusiasm manifested, exceeded anything that had been before witnessed, and greatly impressed Eleanor with a sense of the power and dignity of her royal consort.

When the members of the parliament had passed, the gentlemen-in-waiting on the princes, and of the queen's household followed. The noble personages surrounding the queen, then gradually descended from the state platform, and took their places in the procession. Preceded by the knights of St. Michael, wearing their rich collars and mantles, the ambassadors of all the sovereigns of Europe marched, each conducted by a noble peer of France. The queen's palfrey, richly accoutred with trappings of cloth of gold, was led by her chief equerry, the housings of the palfrey being supported on each side by six pages dressed in the queen's liveries. Then came a hundred Swiss guards led by the young count de Brienne, with banners unfurled, and drums beating. Afterwards marched two hundred gentlemen of the king's household, with their battle-axes on their shoulders, immediately preceding the litter of the queen. Eleanor wore her royal mantle and crown; her robes were resplendent with precious stones; "but the rays they emitted," says a chronicler, "seemed but emanations of the royal grace and singular majesty of her deportment." The dauphin and his brother rode on each side of the queen's litter. It was drawn by two mules, so richly caparisoned with housings of cloth of gold, that the fringes swept the streets. The marshal de Montmorency rode at the head of the first mule, bearing aloft his bâton; and the provost of Paris, Delabarre, preceded him, carrying his white wand of office. Pages, equerries, and running footmen surrounded the litter; and behind, walked twenty-four Scotch archers with bent bows. Next followed the litter of Madame, which was of black velvet, richly embroidered. The duchess was accompanied by her grandchildren, the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite, daughters of the king. The duke de Vendôme, and the duke de Lorraine escorted the royal party. The litter of the queen of Navarre came afterwards: it was draped with rich crimson velvet, ornamented with cords of silk and fringe, and emblazoned with the arms of Navarre, quartered with the fleur-de-lis. Marguerite wore a crown royal on her brow, a mantle of blue velvet, and a surcoat of velvet, furred with ermine. In the indifferent state of her health, she had suffered severely from the fatigue of standing during the long ceremony of the presentation of the addresses to the queen at St. Lazare.

As Marguerite passed, therefore, in the splendid procession which followed queen Eleanor, her pallid looks were remarked; and it was thought that she seemed to suffer from the weight of her crown and mantle, and the fatigue of responding to the acclamations which everywhere greeted her. On one side of the litter of the queen of Navarre rode the duke de Guise; on the other, the count de St. Paul. Marguerite's litter was followed by an equestrian procession of the royal ladies of the court. Each lady was mounted on a palfrey richly accoutred, and was attended by a cavalier of suitable rank. First rode the Princess Isabel of Navarre, with the count de Mielle. Then followed the duchess de Vendôme and the marquis de Pont; the duchess de Lorraine and the count d'Enguien; the duchess de Nemours and the count de Nevers. The younger brother of the count de Nevers attended mademoiselle de Vendôme; the countess de Nevers rode next, escorted by the marshal de la Marck; and mademoiselle de Guise* closed this procession of princesses of the blood royal with the count de Brienne. The maréchale de Chatillon, mistress of the robes to queen Eleanor, headed, riding alone, another long procession of the ladies of the court. The ladies who attracted most attention by their beauty and the richness of their attire, were the consort of the marshal de Montmorency, the countess de Brion, Diane de Poitiers, grande sénéchale of Normandy, and her daughter Françoise de Brèzé, maréchale de la Marck. Then followed the queen's maids of honour; twelve of these were noble Spanish ladies, who had remained to grace Eleanor's entry into Paris. They were attired alike in crimson satin richly embroidered, and rode upon mules. After this brilliant cavalcade, consisting of all the young, the beautiful, and the gallant of the court of France, came three covered chariots, very richly adorned with cloth of gold and blazonry, conveying ladies of the court, those whom age or infirmity incapacitated from riding on horseback.*

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* "On this occasion," says the president La Place, in his Commentaries, "the king first sanctioned the aspiring pretensions of Claude, duke de Guise, by permitting his daughter Mary, afterwards queen of Scotland, to appear arrayed in a royal mantle, and to take her place amongst the princesses of the blood." Francis afterwards became sensible of the impolicy of such an admission on the part of the crown, and at the marriage of the count d'Aumale, second son of the duke de Guise, with the youngest daughter of the duchess de Valentinois, he absolutely denied the claim of the Guises to precedence as members of the royal family of France, by forbidding the bride to wear a robe of violet velvet, and the coronet of a royal princess.

In the order detailed, this pageant defiled through the streets of Paris, until the queen's litter came to a halt before the porch of the metropolitan cathedral of Nôtre Dame. Eleanor then descended from her litter with the assistance of the marshal de Montmorency; while at the same time, the noblemen appointed to bear the mantles of the three royal duchesses train-bearers to the queen, assisted them to dismount from their palfreys. The church was sumptuously adorned; and the nave, up which the queen and her *cortège* passed to the high altar, was lined by gentlemen-at-arms, each man shouldering his battle-axe.

As soon as a salute of artillery, and the pealing of the cathedral bells announced her majesty's arrival, the dean and chapter of Notre Dame, and the clergy of the diocese of Sens, to the number of one hundred and sixty, clad in capes of cloth of gold, preceded by choristers in surplices and dalmatics, advanced to meet her. The dean of Notre Dame presented the queen with holy water, with which she devoutly crossed herself on the forehead. The procession of clergy then defiled before the queen, and preceded her to the altar, chanting most melodiously Te Deum Laudamus, amidst the pealing of the cathedral organs and the clashing of bells. Eleanor walked under a canopy of state, the lappets of her mantle being borne by the dauphin and his brothers; and her train supported by the duchesses de Vendôme, de Lorraine, and de Nemours, as at the coronation. Madame came next; she was followed by the queen of Navarre, who walked between the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite. In front of the high altar stood the cardinal legate and chancellor Duprat, attended by the cardinals de Grammont and de Tournon. Eleanor knelt to receive the episcopal benediction; she then seated herself on a throne placed near the altar. Madame took possession of a chair of state opposite, as did also Marguerite and her young nieces. When the royal party was seated, the grand Penitentiary of Notre Dame advanced, and addressed a long harangue to the queen, which afterwards met with due response from the cardinal Duprat. When this ceremonial concluded, the queen rose, and returned to her litter in the same order as she had entered the cathedral. The procession then escorted Eleanor to the Palais, where she was to sojourn until the morrow, in order to be present at the banquet and ball to be given in the evening in honour of her entry into the capital.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

The grand hall of the Palais was most sumptuously hung for the festive occasion; and the loyal citizens of Paris surpassed themselves in the taste and richness of the decorations there displayed. The upper end of the hall was draped with white satin, blazoned with the armorial bearings of France and Spain; the space between each escutcheon being filled by the devices of the king, the queen, of Madame, and the queen of Navarre. A magnificent throne of violet velvet was placed in the centre of the marble table,* at which the queen was to sup; the whole being surmounted by a velvet canopy, spangled with fleurs-de-lis. The floor beneath the table was spread with Turkey carpets of the softest texture. The walls of the lower part of the hall were adorned with tapestries representing historical subjects. Various platforms and galleries were erected in different parts of the hall for the accommodation of the courtiers, and for those privileged spectators admitted to view the ceremonial. The buffet of rich plate, standing on the right of the haut-dais, attracted especial admiration. The most gorgeous specimens of the skill of the Roman and Florentine artists, so liberally patronized by Francis, dazzled the eye. The shields and vases, *chefs d'œuvres* of Cellini, with their exquisite proportions, and the perfect symmetry of form of the nymphs, knights, and gladiators with which the artist adorned his works, were gazed upon by the king's faithful lieges of Paris with enthusiastic wonder. The hall was lighted by rows of chandeliers very richly gilt, and in every chandelier four wax lights burned.*

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* This celebrated round marble table at the Palais, the festive board of the royal race of Valois on so many state occasions, was consumed by fire in 1618.

The queen entered the banqueting-hall about eight o'clock. She was accompanied by Madame, and by the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite. All the royal ladies who had followed in the cavalcade through the streets of Paris attended her, excepting the queen of Navarre; for Marguerite felt so exhausted by the fatiguing ceremonial of the day as to find herself incapable of partaking in the festivities of the banquet. On the right of the queen, at the marble table, were the legate Duprat, the cardinals De Grammont and De Tournon, the papal nuncio, and the ambassadors of Spain, England, and of the republic of Venice. At Eleanor's left hand sate Madame, the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite, the princess Isabel of Navarre, the duchesses de Vendôme, de Lorraine, and de Nemours, Mademoiselles de Vendôme and de Guise, and the countess de Nevers. The grand master de Montmorency received and placed the dishes before the queen, in his capacity of first maître d'hôtel of the king's household.

At the termination of the banquet, a space was cleared in the hall for dancing. A species of masquerade first ensued, which was not joined in by the queen nor by the royal dames who supped with her. A hundred gentlemen of the king's household masked, danced with the ladies of the court; their deportment and wit occasioning the greatest merriment. Probably Francis and the king of Navarre mingled in the gay scene, in disguise. Before quitting the hall, queen Eleanor descended from the haut-dais and danced a minuet with the duke de Lorraine. The court then retired; largesse was bountifully distributed to the spectators, and the festivities concluded.†

An interval of two days intervened between the queen's entry into Paris and the grand banquet given by the municipality of Paris to the royal family, in honour of that auspicious event. Glad enough must Eleanor and her noble dames have been of that brief period of repose, and for the temporary suspension of the fatiguing ceremonial, which the hot weather rendered almost intolerable. Marguerite passed this interval almost in seclusion; as she was still much indisposed from the effects of the excitement of the coronation and the queen's entry into Paris. Neither had she yet recovered from the shock occasioned by the decease of her infant son. This grief dwelt in Marguerite's susceptible mind, which was always peculiarly alive to the solemn mystery attending a future state of existence. Many were the fanciful theories which she nourished on the subject; for this tendency to indulge imaginative speculation, often verging on superstition, had been fostered by the tone of Marguerite's correspondence with the bishop of Meaux. Briçonnet's mystical sublimities, ever soaring to the contemplation of things ideal and spiritual, were never tempered by the suggestions of reason, or enlightened by the aid of revelation. The imaginative and poetical mind of the queen of Navarre eagerly imbibed the visions thus presented to her. This indulgence, however, had neither enfeebled her faith nor weakened her character; but it produced gradually a mournfulness of spirit, at times almost amounting to depression, which increased in susceptibility every succeeding year of her life.

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* Godefroy,—Cérémonial de France.

† Godefroy.

At the express desire of her brother, whose every wish was a command to Marguerite, she accompanied the queen to the banquet which was given at the Hotel de Ville on Sunday, the 19th day of March. Marguerite sat on Eleanor's left hand at the feast, which was very superbly ordered. The royal party, at the conclusion of the banquet, were entertained by pageants, comedies, and ballets. The civic authorities attended, arrayed in splendid robes of *mipartie* velvet, the same as worn by them on the queen's entry into Paris. A deputation of the municipality, headed by the provost of the merchants of Paris, afterwards presented the queen with two magnificent candelabra of silver gilt, six feet high, and valued at the sum of 10,000 livres, as a donation to her majesty from the city. Eleanor received the gift in the most gracious manner. She assured the municipality that she admired extremely the candelabra presented to her; and she promised the authorities that if it were ever in her power to confer a favour on the city of Paris, they might rely upon her good will. The dauphin and his two young brothers were then each presented by the loyal Parisians with a mule, very richly trapped with housings of fine velvet, of the colour of their respective liveries; while Madame received a small silver gilt medallion portrait of St. Louis, adorned with twelve large pearls, and purchased by the authorities of Paris for the sum of 800 livres Tournois.*

This banquet at the Hotel de Ville closed the festivities given in honour of the coronation of queen Eleanor—an event celebrated with such regal magnificence as to elicit from the emperor Charles V. himself, expressions of astonishment and admiration.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

CHAPTER IV.

Removal of the queen of Navarre for change of air to St. Cloud—Illness of Madame—She summons her daughter—Her dread of death—Departure of Marguerite and her mother to Fontainebleau—Misunderstanding between the king and Marguerite—Uneasiness of the queen—Her letter to her brother—France is ravaged by plague and famine—Visit of the princes to Fontainebleau to see Madame—Her failing health—Marguerite writes her fears respecting Madame to the king—Louisa despatches the cardinal de Tournon to her son at Blois—Dangerous attack of illness experienced by Madame—Her employments when at Fontainebleau—The anxiety felt by Marguerite—Her letter to the king—The Sorbonne renews its persecution—Lefèvre is cited to defend his faith—He applies to queen Marguerite for protection—She procures his honourable dismissal from the post of royal librarian, and affords Lefèvre an asylum at Nérac—Marguerite publishes her poem, "Le Miroir de l'Âme Pecheresse"—She is disliked and feared by the Sorbonne—She satirizes the cruel zeal of the theologians—Her poem of "L'Inquisiteur"—Condition of Germany—Election of Ferdinand as king of the Romans—The League of Smalkalden—The confederated princes send ambassadors to ask protection from the king—They are received by queen Marguerite at Fontainebleau—She sends them to Blois, with a letter to Montmorency—Displeasure felt by the Universities—Marguerite causes the book of Hours to be translated into French for her own use—The precarious condition of Madame—Marguerite imparts to her mother the opinion of the physicians that her recovery is impossible—Ravages of the pestilence in the neighbourhood of Fontainebleau—Departure of Madame for Romorentin—She proceeds as far as Grès—Her illness increases—Letter written by Marguerite to the king—Circumstances attending the decease of the duchesse d'Angoulême—Marguerite's grief—She is joined by the king at Fontainebleau—They remove to Chantilly—Funeral obsequies of Madame—King Francis writes to the emperor to impart the decease of his mother—The reply sent by Charles—Marguerite visits Béarn—Coldness felt by the king of Navarre for the king and the marshal de Montmorency—The queen visits her nephews at Amboise—Her letter to the king—Arrival of queen Marguerite in Béarn—She appoints Roussel to be her chaplain in ordinary—Innovations in religion sanctioned by the queen—Her protection of reform—Progress of the king and queen of Navarre throughout their principalities—They establish a cloth manufactory in the town of Nay—Popularity of queen Marguerite—Her charities—Her interview with Elias at Pamiers—The sovereigns effect a reformation in the criminal code of the principalities—Wise administration of the king of Navarre—Marguerite's park and gardens at Pau—Her literary occupations and theological studies—La Messe a sept Points—She dismisses Solon, one of her chaplains, from her service—The king of Navarre sanctions his consort's proceedings—The queen causes a sacred drama, written by herself, to be performed in the great hall of the castle of Pau—The heretical tendencies of this composition—Displeasure felt by the cardinal de Grammont—Religious persecution in the south of France.

THE health of the queen of Navarre still continuing very feeble and indifferent, she was advised by her physician Goinret to try change of air. Early, therefore, in the month of May, Marguerite took up her abode at St. Cloud—a village—though it boasted then of only an episcopal palace*—that was much frequented for the purity of the air, and for the virtue of its water, which was supposed to possess rare medicinal qualities.

Marguerite derived great benefit from her sojourn at St. Cloud: nevertheless her residence there was short; for Madame, whose health had not failed throughout the recent fatiguing ceremonies, suffered a relapse, and impatiently asked for her daughter's society. Louisa's constitution was exhausted by the frequent returns of the agonizing disorder from which she suffered. Medicine failed now to afford her relief, but seemed to aggravate the pains which she endured. Her mind, nevertheless, was clear and energetic as ever; and with that wonderful self-command which always distinguished her, Madame continued to take the same active share in her son's counsels. There were seasons, however, when this mental activity was succeeded by hours of gloomy depression; and she was admonished by a warning voice within, that human skill could no longer arrest the progress of the malady bearing her to the grave. Religion exercised few softening influences over the stern character of Louisa; and no fervent trust that God would assuage the severity of her suffering, and cheer the sorrowful hours intervening before her inevitable separation from those she loved most on earth by inspiring the sure hope of future reunion, as yet shed gladness over the sick-chamber of Madame. For days, sometimes, her weakness was so great, that she could not rise from her bed; but Louisa endured the sharpest pain, and submitted to the treatment deemed requisite by her medical attendants with unflinching fortitude. No one dared to apprise her of her danger, for she always evinced a morbid dread of death; and it was understood at court that the preacher, who often made that solemn subject the theme of his discourses, was sure to lose her favour, and upon some pretext to receive his dismissal. "As if one did not know sufficiently well that the fate of all is to die," Louise used scoffingly to remark. "Preachers, when they are at a loss what to say in their sermons, and have run the length of their knowledge, invariably take refuge by discussing this one everlasting subject of death!"* The theme, however, was one of very present and deep interest to Louise; though her known displeasure at being reminded of her own decease, prevented her physicians from admonishing her betimes of the fatal symptoms which had recently developed themselves in her malady.

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* The summer residence of the bishop of Paris.

On her return to St. Germain, the queen of Navarre was distressed at the change in her mother's condition. Tormented day and night by acute pains in the stomach, and by continued sickness, combined with her usual sufferings from gout, Madame's existence had become a burden to her. Notwithstanding her illness, Louisa still admitted Duprat to daily audience, and imparted her opinions on state affairs. Braillon, one of her physicians, alone gave Madame hope of recovery; and even promised to undertake her cure. By his advice, probably, the duchess resolved to remove from St. Germain to Fontainebleau, a place which agreed remarkably well with her constitution. Accompanied by Marguerite, Madame performed the journey by slow stages, reposing in her litter. This painful journey was probably commenced about the end of June. Madame took leave of her son at St. Germain, who promised to visit her at Fontainebleau, as soon as political affairs rendered it possible for him to quit the capital.

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* Brantôme.

Before she left the court, a trifling misunderstanding occurred between Marguerite and her brother, which occasioned the queen great uneasiness. It arose merely about a word that Marguerite had unthinkingly used when speaking of the precarious condition of Madame, and of her fears respecting her brother's health, which had been reported to the king by the officious interference of some person, whose name is not recorded. Francis watched, almost with a lover's jealousy, every word uttered respecting him by his beloved sister. In this matter, however, the king seems to have been most needlessly susceptible; for the whole of Marguerite's offence was, that in conversation she had expressed a conviction that she should survive both her brother and Madame. This assertion appeared to Francis as treason against their "loyal trinity," and as almost a crime for Marguerite to contemplate such a possibility. On taking leave of his sister, therefore, before her departure from St. Germain, the king reproachfully repeated her words, and added, "that perhaps, as she had said, God had ordained that her life should exceed his own, and that of Madame." These words, but especially the manner in which they were uttered, distressed Marguerite greatly; and at the end of the first day's journey she wrote the following vindication to her brother:—

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO FRANCIS I.*

* "Monseigneur,—You well know that it is not in my power to conceal from you anything, or even to dissimulate my thoughts; for all my life long it has been my habit to speak to you without fear or reserve, expressing my wishes as to my brother, in order, afterwards, to receive your command, as that of one who stands to me in stead of a father, and from whom I receive all that I possess or can hope for in this world, and for whom I have esteemed the sacrifice of my own will a privilege—and should deem either my life happy, or my death glorious, if only I might render you service. But, monseigneur, it

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* Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl. Fran., MS., No. 99.

cannot be that God has doomed me to the misfortune that this my constant aim is unknown to you; and that the voluntary obedience, which I have tendered out of love for you, should have produced so contrary an effect, as to put into your mind, that which mine cannot even dwell upon without insupportable pain. From the purgatory of this fear, I very humbly beseech you, monseigneur, to give me relief, and to do me the honour to believe that if I have said that I thought to be the last survivor, it was thinking to receive the summit and perfection of every misfortune and sorrow that God can inflict upon one of his creatures; for, monseigneur, if my desire corresponded with the fear that I expressed I should have taken more trouble to preserve my life and my health than I have done. I feel sure, monseigneur, that you do me the justice to believe this; but the words that you said to me when we took leave of you, "That perhaps God had ordained that my life should exceed your own, and that of Madame," have since weighed so heavily upon my heart, that unless I had written this letter in the hope of receiving the reply from you which I so greatly need, I am sure my life could not long have sustained this suspense; for I have neither aim, hope, nor intention, but to live and die,

"Your very humble and very obedient subject and sister,

"MARGUERITE."

This explanation appears to have given satisfaction to the king, and to have effaced every painful feeling from his mind. Francis exacted from his sister a perfect unity of thought, sentiment, and affection, with himself. The pure sisterly love which Marguerite bore him, so unselfish and elevated in its devotion, was inexpressibly soothing to Francis, oppressed as he often was by cares of no slight magnitude. The sympathy, which Marguerite deeply felt, and expressed so well, the king always depended upon. No one could supply the place of Marguerite. Madame dominated in the council; the duchesse d'Estampes ruled during the hours which the king gave to pleasure and dissipation; Montmorency and Brion, when Francis gathered his noble cavaliers to indulge in manly and chivalrous pastimes: but his sister was his dearest friend and counsellor—Marguerite's musical voice and her caresses consoled the king in his hours of depression. Her admonitions also, spoken with the freedom alone becoming to the king's sister, were yet devoid of the authoritative peremptoriness which Madame occasionally assumed while privately conferring with her son. Francis made Marguerite the depository of his secrets and future designs. Every act of Marguerite's life testified how fervently she returned the trust reposed in her by her brother. She employed her skilful pen in recording his praises, in prose and verse; and in writing those numerous letters so carefully treasured by Francis, and which have descended to these days. Her diplomatic talents were always at his service; and her knowledge of languages aided the king and his ministers on many occasions, where, but for her, a most inconvenient revelation of political measures, not yet matured, must have ensued, had assistance been asked from the learned men of the capital.

Marguerite wrote the following sonnet, addressed to her brother—on some occasion when his jealous umbrage had taken alarm; perhaps it might have been after the words spoken so incautiously at St. Germain—and sent with the letter given above.

"Ce n'est qu'ung cueur, et ne sera jamais
De vous et moy, ainsi je le promectz,
Quelque chose que vous puisse advenir.
Le sang ne peult au contraire venir
Ny la raison : aussi je m'y soubzmectz.

"Ma voulonté à la vostre remectz;
Parolle et faictz entre voz mains je mectz;
Puisque je veulx vostre ainsi devenir,
Ce n'est qu'un cueur!

"Ainsi du tout à vous je me commectz,
Qui vostre suis et seray desormais
Mieulx qu'oncques; mais plaise vous souvenir
De nostre accord, pour nous y maintenir
A toujoursmais : puisqu'en vous me desmectz
Ce n'est qu'un cueur!"*

The fatal epidemic, meanwhile, continued to ravage France, decimating the population. The scarcity of provision had rather augmented than decreased: the rain, which had fallen almost without cessation from the month of January, was succeeded by a hot burning sun, which pouring its fierce rays on the stagnant pools and marshy districts of the country, fearfully increased the infection.† The people were tormented by swarms of loathsome insects, generated by the unwholesome condition of the atmosphere. In vain the labourer sowed his crops; the seed was either destroyed, or the young shoots devoured as soon as they reached the surface of the earth. Several cases of plague had occurred amongst the inhabitants of the little hamlet of Fontainebleau; yet though Madame was aware of the fact, her restless desire for change predominated over her fear of infection. Orders, however, were transmitted for the immediate removal of the royal children from Fontainebleau to the castle of Amboise, around which measures were taken to cut off communication with adjoining districts.

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* Captivité du roi François I.

† Paradin,—Hist. de Notre Temps.

Madame arrived at Fontainebleau about the middle of June, 1531. She was soon followed by the king and queen; for the anxiety which Francis felt about his mother's health was extreme. The change of air seems to have wrought a temporary benefit in the condition of Madame. She was no longer wholly confined to her couch; and she found herself able occasionally to take exercise in the gardens. Seeing that Madame was improving in health beyond his most anxious expectations, Francis made but a brief sojourn at Fontainebleau, and, accompanied by Eleanor, he proceeded to Blois, where his "buildings" needed inspection, having previously received a promise from his mother that she would join him there as soon as she felt equal to renew her journey. At the desire of Madame, the king sent a command to the governor of the princes at Amboise, authorizing their return to Fontainebleau to visit their grandmother.

The princes arrived a few days after the departure of Francis, when Madame was suffering more than usual from depression and weakness; for a secret presentiment haunted her that she had taken her last farewell of her idolized son. The coming of her young nephews, therefore, was hailed by Marguerite as a most opportune event. The endearments of her favourite grandson, the little duke d'Angoulême, roused Louisa from her melancholy bodings, while he cheered her by his childish mirth. It was the nature of Louisa's malady to excite hopes which sometimes the brief interval even of a night cruelly dissipated. Anything that afforded distraction to her mother's mind, and relieved it from gloomy depression, was therefore joyfully welcomed by Marguerite; and she hastened to communicate her delight to her brother at the cheering effect this visit of the princes had had upon the spirits of Madame. Aware of the king's partiality for his third son, Marguerite reports to him a speech made by the little duke, then a bold and forward boy of nine years old, which she thought would give him pleasure.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO FRANCIS I.*

"Monseigneur,—I have not feared to trouble you with this letter, in order to report the improvement in the health of Madame, which has failed her gravely since your departure, until this afternoon, when she received a visit from three little doctors, who speedily made her forget her pain I assure you it is impossible she could have derived greater benefit than she has done from this visit. The princes, however, were very sorrowful and discontented when they learned your departure; for M. d'Angoulême had made up his mind that if he could only see you again, never to loose your hand; for he says, that even if you go to hunt the wild boar, he knows that you will take good care that nothing hurts him. Believe me, monseigneur, that Madame, while listening to this and other discourse, could not refrain from shedding abundance of tears, which have done her great good; for you know the saying—

"'Qui pleure larmes par amour,
N'en sent jamais mal ny douleur.'

I close my letter by assuring you of the good health of the princes, whom I beg that God may speedily restore to you. Monseigneur, d'Aire† has given me ample assurance that they are healthy and under good treatment, as I hope you will soon judge for yourself. I beseech you, monseigneur, always to hold in gracious favour

"Your very humble and very obedient subject and *mignonne*,

"MARGUERITE."

For some few days the health of Madame seemed making steady progress. Accompanied by her daughter, she went to hear complines in a nunnery in the neighbourhood of Fontainebleau; her spirits rose, and she spoke of being soon able to join her son at Blois. The cardinal de Tournon remained in attendance upon the duchess, but Louisa, in the sanguine hope which this temporary improvement in her health inspired, insisted on despatching him to Blois to inform the king of the favourable change. "Madame, after hearing complines with the nuns, found herself so much better, that her discourse became brisk and stirring as ever, as our messenger will inform you, monseigneur," wrote Marguerite to her brother. "Madame commanded him to return to you, because, as she jestingly said, she had come to the conclusion that he was a better sportsman than an ecclesiastic."* The opinion which Louisa playfully expressed of the cardinal de Tournon was true enough; the fulfilment of his ecclesiastical duties was seldom permitted to interfere with his assiduous attendance on the court; and the pleasures of the chase, because patronized by the king, were far from being abjured by the dexterous cardinal. The unusual exertion made by the duchess d'Angoulême occasioned, however, a relapse of her malady. About midnight, after sleeping comfortably for several hours, she awoke suffering excruciating pain, and was soon after seized with violent sickness, which continued during a considerable part of the night. Towards morning, Madame was able to take some slight repose; and though much weakened, she was again free from pain before the departure of the cardinal. Marguerite wrote a full detail of Madame's sudden indisposition to the king; but not satisfied with the message which she desired her daughter to give, to the effect that she felt herself tolerably well again, Louisa sent Francis a few lines to express her deep disappointment at the inevitable delay she was consequently compelled to make in her journey to Blois. "Monseigneur," wrote Madame to her son, whom she so yearned to embrace,† "your own feelings must testify to you, better than I can express it, the depth and fervour of the extreme desire which I have to see you, and how displeasing it is to me that I cannot set out from hence to-morrow. But, monseigneur, as you have doubtless learned from the courier Plessis, I suffered the day before yesterday from violent pains, and though it is true that I feel better to-day, yet I am not well enough to travel; for it is not worth while to set out in order to be compelled to take up my abode in the first house by the wayside which I come to." In this world, however, there were to be no more bright days for Madame, but hours only of restless agony, or of utter prostration, both mental and bodily. "Yesterday Madame found herself very feeble, and nearly fainted away. I was not with her at the time, but heard of it afterwards from herself,"* wrote the queen of Navarre to Montmorency, who was with the court at Blois. Marguerite, however, develops at length her fears and anxieties respecting her mother's health, in a letter which she addressed to the king, probably about the middle of the month of August, 1531. The physicians attributed the increase of many of the most aggravated symptoms of Madame's disorder to her pining anxiety to rejoin her son. Marguerite entreats her brother, therefore, to contrive some way for the safe removal of the duchess to Blois. She gives also an affecting account of the way in which the once haughty and strong-minded Louise of Savoy passed her time when enjoying a temporary respite from the pain which constantly oppressed her. Her greatest solace was to assemble the sick and infirm, and with her own hands to dress their wounds, in order to make essay of the virtues of an ointment which she believed possessed extraordinary healing powers.

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* Bibl. Roy. F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 70.

† Sub-preceptor to the dauphin and his brothers.

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* Bib. Roy., F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 129.

† Bib. Roy., MSS. de Béthune.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO FRANCIS I.†

"Monseigneur,—I do not know how to express forcibly enough the anxiety and tribulation which afflicts us here; for the good we have been accustomed to enjoy during your absence, which was the society of Madame, gives us now greater grief than consolation. Whatever constraint Madame puts upon her feelings it is easy to perceive, monseigneur, the lamentable change which has occurred in her condition; never have I seen her so altered and depressed during any one of your previous absences. If it pleases you to be informed of her greatest recreation, it is this—after dinner, at the hour when she is accustomed to grant audiences, instead of employing herself with her needle as usual, she sends in quest of poor people afflicted with grievous wounds, which she dresses with her own hands, in order to try the efficacy of an ointment that she believes possesses singular virtue. Besides, nothing happens that does not seem to add to her depression; so that I am compelled to lament thus to you; but I beseech you, monseigneur, do not betray what I have written to her, as she would be displeased. I have therefore, to entreat you, monseigneur, not to leave Madame longer here, deprived of your society; but when your own health permits, it would be advisable to send for her that she may rejoin you, accompanied by only a few of her attendants. The remainder of her train can remain here with Messieurs. I will stay also, if it pleases you; a plan which will give infinite contentment to the duke* and his brothers. If I thought that the illness of Madame would terminate favourably, I should not trouble you thus; but the symptoms which I see have determined me to write to you as to one from whom it is my duty to conceal nothing, for the love and affection which I bear you, and the strict confidence subsisting between us—a privilege you have always permitted

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8514.

† Ibid. No. 8595.

"Your very humble and very obedient subject and sister,

"MARGUERITE."

Rumours, meanwhile, of the fierce persecution carried on by the parliament of Paris against the adherents of reform, reached the ears of the queen of Navarre, in her retreat at Fontainebleau; which, surrounded as the palace was by a plague-infected district, was almost cut off from communication with the capital. Certain of support from the government, even in its most sanguinary designs, the Sorbonne proscribed, censured, and punished with fearless rigour. Its terrible authority few now dare defy; and the theologians of Paris once more beheld themselves and their doctrine paramount throughout the realm. It was, however, only by showing profound deference to the arbitrary Duprat;' and by adopting the decrees of the council of Sens as the foundation for all ecclesiastical procedures, that the university triumphed. The *amour-propre* of the powerful minister was flattered by being considered as both the civil and the ecclesiastical legislator of France; and he was as little prepared to suffer the infringement of one of the canons of his council, as to permit the violation of any edict which had passed the great seal.

There was one man in France, hitherto almost privileged to avow his preference for the doctrines of the Reformation, living unmolested, secure in the powerful protection of the queen of Navarre, and in the gratitude manifested towards him by the king for the talent and assiduity which he had displayed in the education of the princes. Lefèvre—for it was he upon whom the Sorbonne again affixed its terrible glance—had thrice defied the censures of the university, and escaped the doom it decreed for the heretic. The doctor was residing at Blois, in the enjoyment of constant intercourse with the king; and yearly increasing his influence over the minds of the young dauphin and his brothers. Lefèvre's meekness of character and his learning rendered him at all times an acceptable companion to Francis; the library at Blois increased greatly under his superintendence; and the refined taste of the scholar opened to the king many paths of literature hitherto unexplored, and which Francis pursued with eager avidity. Admitted often to the royal table, Lefèvre's eloquence and his skill in polemical discussion at once interested and surprised the king. At different periods the king had in vain offered the highest ecclesiastical dignities in the kingdom to Lefèvre; but sensible that his religion must always render him a mark for the malice and enmity of the universities, he constantly refused episcopal honours. Not in the least mollified by this tacit submission to their ban, the Sorbonnists now resolved on the expulsion of the aged Lefèvre from France; and proceedings were instituted, according to the canons of Sens, to recommence the process for heresy, which the university had before been compelled to suspend. Some friend of Lefèvre's, however, gave him timely notice of the contemplated act, and warned him to save himself by flight. The doctor of Etaples, however, had experienced too many perils and vicissitudes, through all of which his faith nobly sustained him, to adopt this hasty counsel at the age of eighty-eight. Marguerite, his former gracious patroness, was now his firm friend; and the king besides owed him both protection and gratitude for his care of the young prince Charles.

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* Prince Charles, duke d'Angoulême.

The queen of Navarre at once responded to Lefèvre's application, by offering him an asylum at Nérac; and she moreover undertook to obtain for him honourable permission to depart from Blois. Accordingly, Marguerite wrote to the marshal de Montmorency, under whose control as grand master, Lefèvre the royal librarian was nominally placed, requesting permission for the doctor to absent himself from Blois, in order to recruit his health by paying a visit to a friend. In religious matters Marguerite no longer placed the same dependance on Montmorency as formerly; therefore, she carefully concealed her intention of affording Lefèvre a refuge in Béarn. The arbitrary disposition of the marshal took umbrage at the temerity of the upholders of the new doctrines, in presuming to emancipate themselves from the ancient and proscriptive homage paid to the Church of Rome. "When kings and nobles render obedience, and states proffer homage to the universal father of Christendom, the Pope, shall humble and insignificant individuals, men of the pen and the robe dare to abstain, and create schism and civil warfare, where but for them all would be unity?" argued the haughty marshal, whose influence in affairs of religion had been latterly at the command of the chancellor cardinal, in defiance, as Montmorency well knew, of Marguerite's wishes.

Knowing that her brother was surrounded by men inimical to Lefèvre's principles, Marguerite made her demand with great apparent indifference and circumspection. She said: "The good man, Lefèvre, writes to me that he finds himself rather indisposed at Blois; besides, he is menaced with molestation elsewhere. Upon both these accounts, therefore, he would willingly depart for a time to visit *a friend* for change of air, if the king would be pleased to give him leave so to do. He has put the library in order, having numbered the books and made a catalogue of them, which he will deliver up at any time the king may appoint. I beg you to obtain from the king the permission which he solicits, in doing which you will confer a singular pleasure upon *vostre bonne tante et amye*, MARGUERITE."* Aware of the danger which menaced the venerable doctor, Francis reluctantly granted him permission to depart; and at the great age of eighty-eight Lefèvre went forth a wanderer from the realm of France. Under Marguerite's protection, however, he found a haven of refuge; and the good old man passed the remainder of his days at Nérac in security and peace.

For a brief period the reformed teachers were silenced, intimidated at the rigour displayed towards them. Gradually they deserted Paris, and congregated in Béarn, or in the border towns between France and Switzerland, ready to escape for their lives when menaced by the terrible chamber of Inquisition, which exercised its functions with unabated activity. To Marguerite the priesthood vowed the most bitter resentment: the theologians of the Sorbonne forgot not that to her influence and support of the so-called heresy, they owed the slights they had received throughout the reign of Francis; and that even when the omnipotence of the Roman faith was now authoritatively proclaimed, it was she who still afforded refuge to the proscribed.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8514.

Deprived of communication with the capital, and in assiduous attendance at Fontainebleau on the dying couch of Madame, the queen of Navarre again avowed her participation in the opinions the Sorbonne strove to crush; and that by a mode as exasperating to the theologians, as it was unexpected. Marguerite's poem, "Le Miroir de l'âme Pecheresse,"[*] a book of holy and beautiful meditations, was published, by her command, in the autumn of this year, at Alençon. The queen omitted in her verse all mention of purgatory, or the invocations of saints; and passed over other leading tenets of the Romish faith in silence. This most interesting poem contains the outpourings of Marguerite's soul: her doubts, her fears, her anxieties, and her fervent aspirations after good are all here revealed. The book bears as a motto, the words, "*Cor mundum crea in me, Deus,*" a prayer constantly on her lips; and the opening lines of the poem thus entreat the indulgence of its readers:—

"Si vous lisez cette œuvre toute entière
Arrêtez-vous, sans plus, à la matière,
En excusant la rhyme, et le langage,
Voyant que c'est d'une femme l'ouvrage,
Qui n'a en soi science ne savoir,
Fors ung desir que chacun puisse voir,
Que faict le don de Dieu le Créateur,
Quand il lui plaist justifier ung cœur."

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[*] Le Miroir de l'âme Pecheresse on quel elle recongnoist ses faultes et pechez, aussi ses graces et benefices à elle faitez par Jesu Christ, son espoux. La Marguerite très noble et precieuse, s'est preposée à ceulx qui de bon cueur la cerchoient. A Alençon, chez maistre Simon du Bois, MDXXXI. Marguerite's poem was translated into English by Queen Elizabeth. The book bore the following title: "A godly medytacyon of the Christen sowle, compiled in Frenche by Lady Margarete, quene of Navarre; and aptely translated into English by the right vertuose lady Elyzabeth, daughter to our late sovereyne, king Henry the VIII. Imprimed in the year of our Lorde, 1548, in Apryll."

The poem of the queen of Navarre was received in gloomy silence by the Sorbonne: at a time when it persecuted heretics under the name and the authority of the crown, the sovereign's all-powerful sister put forth to the world a composition in which, though the doctrine of Rome was not assailed, yet—and this appeared to them an evil of gravest magnitude—an absolute silence was maintained on those points she had been long suspected of rejecting. Marguerite avenged herself for the injurious treatment which she experienced from the Faculty by the keenest irony. Her lively sallies of wit and piquant satire enraged her dogmatizing opponents: their manifestoes so pompous in diction, lagged heavily on the memory when compared with the simplicity and elegance of Marguerite's compositions. In a poem, or "moralité," entitled "L'Inquisiteur," perhaps composed at this very period, when Marguerite's indignation was strongly roused against the Sorbonne for its vindictive persecution of Lefèvre, she indulges in the keenest raillery at the expense of the Faculty. The piece opens with a long soliloquy from the inquisitor, a doctor of the Sorbonne, in which he bewails the extension of the reformed doctrines, and threatens to put down heresy with fire and faggot, unless, indeed, the culprit should be inclined to purchase immunity by a bribe. The interested motives which induced the theologians to persecute, and their ignorance, are themes touched upon by Marguerite with admirable point. The inquisitor commences his soliloquy thus:—

"Le temps s'en va toujours en empirant,
L'on ne fait plus de religion compte.
Nostre credit (dont je voys souspirant)
Se pourroict bien en fin tourner à honte.
Ce savoir neuf, qui le nostre surmonte,
Nous oustera enfin honneur et bruict,
Dont tous les jours fault qu'en chaire je monte
Jusques à ce que par moy soit destruict.
Si je n'avoys qu'aux ignorans affaire,
Je les ferois retourner par la craincte;
Mais je ne puis les sçavans faire taire,
Qui myeulx que moi ont l'escriture saincte;
Car contanter je ne les puis de faincte:
Toujours leur fault alleguer l'escripture,
Dont ilz me font soustenir peine maincte,

Car je ne feiz jamais bonne lecture.
Grant temps y a que suis passé docteur
Dedans Paris par ceulx de la Sorbonne;
Quatre ans y a que suis inquisiteur
De nostre foy, sans espargner personne.
Je ne dys pas que si quelcun me donne
Ung bon present, pour racheter sa vye,
Mais que jamais a nully mot ne sonne,
Qu'à le saulver promptement n'aye envye."*

Having thus taunted the Sorbonnists with their ignorance of the Holy Scriptures, the queen proceeds to recount the ingenious line of reasoning these theologians adopted to console themselves for the unscrupulous manner in which they cruelly condemned suspected persons to the flames. It is the inquisitor, the hero of the piece, who still speaks. He argues:—

"Car il vault myeulx qu'un homme innocent meure
Cruellement, pour estre exemple à tous,
Que cest erreur plus longuemant demeure
Par qui noz loix vont sans dessus dessoubz.
Si l'homme meurt innocent, simple et doux,
Bien heureux est, au ciel trouvera place;
S'il est mauvais, soustenir pouvons nous
Qu'en le faisant mourir, on lui faict grace."

In Germany, meanwhile, the agitation of religious sects and parties continued. Luther, supported by the elector of Saxony, and by the landgrave of Hesse, maintained his ground; and the reformed opinions daily obtained wider dissemination. The princes of Germany, armed one against the other, filled the empire with tumult and faction. The Roman Catholic princes had formed a league with the emperor at Augsbourg for the maintenance of the faith, and for the extirpation of heresy. Charles, skilfully taking advantage of the excitement agitating the states opposed to reform, procured the election of his brother Ferdinand, king of Hungary and Bohemia, as king of the Romans. He assembled a Diet at Cologne during the latter part of the year 1530,[*] and in a long harangue, spoken in the German language, the emperor, with that wonderful precision of detail and method which most of his public addresses exhibit, explained to the electors the necessity compelling him to demand a coadjutor to aid him in the government of the empire. He expatiated upon the extent of his dominions, which prevented him from making a long sojourn in any one portion of his territories; and he proceeded to prove to the assembly the benefit which must accrue to the orthodox amongst themselves, by the appointment of a responsible and capable governor, in whom, during his absence, the authority of the Imperial throne would centre.

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* This farce or "moralité" of "L'Inquisiteur," appears in print for the first time in the appendix attached to a magnificent edition of the Heptameron, edited by M. Le Roux de Lincy, and published a few months ago by La Société des Bibliophiles Français.

The emperor's representations met with almost unanimous acceptance from the Diet.[†] The establishment of a system of government by viceroys invested with all but unlimited powers, was one of the vast political ideas developed by the policy of the emperor Charles V. To the emperor alone were the viceroys subordinate; and in the selections of these important ministers his discrimination in no recorded instance was at fault. If Charles possessed not devoted friends, his talents, his good fortune, and a certain persuasive and condescending mode of address, procured him many zealous partisans. He had the policy, also, to attach to himself the members of his own family, by the unlimited confidence he professed to repose in their loyalty, and also by the splendour of the career he assigned to most of them. To his brother Ferdinand, once a competitor for his Spanish crown, Charles showed boundless trust; nor did he fear to elevate him, during his own absence, to supreme command over the empire and the hereditary duchies of Austria. Cortez and Pizarro in Spanish America; Monçada and Leyva in Italy; the empress Isabel in Castille and Arragon; Ferdinand in Germany; Marguerite of Austria, and afterwards Mary queen of Hungary, over the Low Countries; each exercised viceregal powers in separate departments of Charles's vast empire, in perfect submission to his system of policy; while the emperor, from whose genius emanated the political theories so ably embodied by his representatives, was at liberty to watch over the general welfare, and to organize those campaigns by which he maintained his military repute and supremacy over Europe.

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[*] Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps. Sleidan Commentar.

[†] Du Bellay. Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

The election of Ferdinand by the Diet assembled at Cologne, might almost be called unanimous. Of the six electors, one alone, the Protestant elector of Saxony, absented himself, and refused his suffrage. Remonstrances were ineffectually addressed to the Diet by the Protestant communities of Germany, and by the elector of Saxony and his son, the landgrave of Hesse, and the dukes William and Louis of Bavaria, and other princes, on the illegality of Ferdinand's election, which they declared had been effected in violation of the privileges conferred on the princes of the empire by the Golden Bull. The malcontents finding that their petitions were treated with scornful indifference, and that Charles coldly summoned them to ratify his brother's elevation, instead of replying to their protests, assembled at Smalkalden, a small town under the jurisdiction of the landgrave of Hesse; where, on the 27th of February, 1531, the princes concluded a league amongst themselves for the preservation of the liberties of the Germanic Confederation.* Ambassadors were despatched by the chiefs of the League of Smalkalden to invite the co-operation of the kings of England and France in the designs of the princes. Thus, by the most perplexing of anomalies, at the period when the government of Francis had ceased to act upon the principles of that wise toleration which distinguished the earlier years of his reign; and the Sorbonne, authorized by the crown, had decreed the extermination of heresy, the demand of the Lutheran princes of Germany, soliciting aid from France, was laid before the council. According to the principles professed by its three dominant spirits, Duprat, Montmorency, and the duchess d'Angoulême, this application should have met with zealous rejection; but the constant aim of the French cabinet, since the return of Francis from captivity, had been the humiliation of Charles V. The bitter enemy of the emperor, by inclination as much as by the force of circumstances, the king of France invariably assumed an attitude hostile to the designs of Charles. When the emperor held the pope captive, and seemed inclined to adopt lenient measures towards his Lutheran subjects, Francis became the ardent champion of the Romish creed. The emperor having become the chief of the League of Augsbourg, and who now menaced the Lutheran princes with destruction unless they returned to obedience to the Holy See, seemed to demand a corresponding change in the policy of the king of France.

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* Sleidan. Commentar.

In Marguerite and the duchess d'Estampes, the confederate princes found zealous friends, whose influence over the king frequently disconcerted the designs of Duprat and his bigoted *coterie*. The ambassadors of the League of Smalkalden, on their way to obtain audience of the king at Blois, failed not to visit Fontainebleau. Madame of course was too ill to admit them to her presence; but Marguerite granted the ambassadors an interview, rather to testify her sympathy in their errand than for anything which she might learn from them relative to the progress of reform in Germany; as the ambassadors could speak the German language only—a tongue the queen was not proficient in. Desirous, however, to aid the envoys of the League to the utmost of her power, Marguerite despatched a gentleman of her household to accompany them to Blois, to whom she intrusted a letter written in their behalf, and addressed to Montmorency. Amongst other things the queen said: "Mon nepveu, I have sent you the ambassadors of the duke de Saxe, and of the landgrave of Hesse. As I do not well understand their language, the gentleman who will deliver this letter to you served me as interpreter, so I send him that he may also explain their errand to you."* Whether Marguerite's recommendation in this matter would have had weight with the king is much to be doubted, had not political considerations intervened to induce him to support the Lutheran princes in their opposition to the emperor. Italy, the land of poetry and romance, and the scene of his youthful triumphs, was remembered by Francis with bitter and ceaseless regret. If the reformed, and the Roman Catholic factions of Germany became actually arrayed in hostilities, Charles, it was argued, must find himself compelled to withdraw his armies from the Milanese; and thus the duchy, the object of the king's ambition, would be left comparatively defenceless. Added to this consideration, there were circumstances which augmented the irritation ever dominant in the mind of Francis against his more fortunate rival. The French attendants of the young princes, who had been sent to the galleys for their supposed participation in the plot to promote the escape of the dauphin and his brother from their prison in Spain, had never been released, despite the frequent solicitations of the king. The emperor, moreover, had sold the county of Ast, the hereditary patrimony of the House of Orleans, to the duke of Savoy; a transaction deeply resented by Francis. Although the emperor could not be accused of having violated the treaty of Cambray by any of these measures, yet Francis maintained that the spirit of the treaty, which tended to peace and conciliation, was daily set at naught by Charles; and that all these vexatious proceedings gave signal testimony of his ill-will towards France. The king therefore courteously received and dismissed the ambassadors of the confederated princes, promising that after he had taken counsel of his good brother Henry VIII. of England, he would send envoys to treat with them.*

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8551.

The negotiations of the king with the Protestant League were watched with jealous umbrage by the theologians of Paris, who fancied that they detected symptoms of relenting in the king's mind towards his persecuted subjects of the reformed faith. The two women whom Francis loved best, Marguerite and the duchess d'Estampes, were constantly besieging him with their prayers and solicitations on behalf of the persecuted reformers. Marguerite's theological studies at Fontainebleau were regarded with the utmost suspicion; and her friendship for, and frequent correspondence with the king's confessor, Guillaume Petit, bishop of Senlis, involved that eminent prelate in much apparently unmerited obloquy with the Sorbonne. Gradually, however, the fact transpired that the bishop, at the solicitation of the queen of Navarre, had translated the

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* Mém. de Du Bellay.

Book of Hours into French for Marguerite's private use, after suppressing, by her direction, the most superstitious passages from many of the prayers, and especially those parts of the service in which the Virgin Mary and the saints were invoked.* The irritation of the university was intense. While the queen of Navarre was thus suffered to make almost open profession of her apostacy from the Church of Rome, it was felt that little reliance could be placed on the steadfast co-operation of the king for the suppression of reform.

The knowledge of her unpopularity with the Romish Church gave Marguerite little disquietude. Occupied, while at Fontainebleau, with her studies, and her assiduous attendance on Madame, the little volume translated for her by the bishop of Senlis became Marguerite's most precious resource. The health of Madame continued steadily to decline, and at the commencement of the month of September she became so enfeebled as to be no longer able to rise from her bed. Her mother's state filled Marguerite with anguish. She perceived that Louisa still clung to the hope of recovery, deceived by the flattering promises of Braillon, her physician. Aware that all shrank from the task of informing Madame of her hopeless condition, Marguerite, after much deliberation, resolved herself to impart the intelligence of their approaching separation. Tenderly, and doubtless with tears, Marguerite uttered the words which it had become her duty to speak as she knelt by her mother's couch, and bade her place her sole hope in God.† Louisa received the tidings with much agitation, yet she still continued incredulous that her condition was so desperate as her daughter represented it to be; and she demanded to see Braillon and her other physicians. In this interview they doubtless had the honesty to confirm Marguerite's words; for it was remarked that Madame, after the departure of her physicians, seemed to resign herself to death, and that anxiety respecting worldly concerns departed from her. Thenceforward Louisa devoted her thoughts to prepare for the awful change which awaited her. Marguerite's knowledge of the Holy Scriptures now became a precious possession to her; for, tormented by agonizing pain, Madame was seldom able to attend to the ministrations of her confessor, and in the brief intervals of comparative ease which her malady afforded, the voice of her daughter brought back to her ear, words that the eloquent lips of the bishop of Meaux had vainly uttered in the days of her prosperity, but which now proved her only comfort. Often when the curtains of her bed were closely drawn, her attendants overheard her engaged in earnest prayer; and frequently during the day Madame would request them to leave her alone for some hours, and on their return traces of deep emotion were visible on her face.

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* Théodore de Beze,—Hist. des Eglises Reformées de France, l. i.

† Le Ferron,—sur Du Haillan, t. ii.,—Hist. de France.

The physicians had given it as their opinion that although the disorder of Madame was necessarily fatal, yet that her life might be prolonged for several weeks. The ravages of the pestilence having greatly increased in the neighbourhood of Fontainebleau, it was therefore deemed advisable to remove Madame without delay, from fear of infection. The dearth of provisions was likewise so great that sufficient quantities of food for the consumption of the inmates of the palace could not be obtained, as venders from a distance declined to endanger their lives by communicating with the infected district. The danger at length became so imminent that Marguerite dared no longer write to her brother, as she feared that her letters might convey infection. The young princes had returned some weeks previously to Amboise, which place had as yet escaped the ravages of the fatal epidemic. Not a drop of rain had fallen since the commencement of July; and the earth was so parched and hardened that the plough could not penetrate it. The flowers and the foliage withered beneath the ardent rays of the sun. The herbage was burned, and the cattle died in the field for want of food, and shelter from the piercing heat. The condition of the country began at length to absorb the attention of Francis, who, throughout his reign, suffered foreign politics to engross more of his attention than was consistent with the prosperity of his people. Lawless disturbances broke forth in many of the provinces; and bands of famishing peasants, armed, for the most part, only with their implements of agriculture, entered the towns, and forcibly helped themselves to food and corn. The castles of many of the nobility were assailed, broken into, and rifled. The highroads swarmed with robbers and banditti, who fell on the unsuspecting traveller, and carried him off to their strongholds until he consented to purchase his liberty by ransom.* Measures of repression were hastily adopted by the privy council; but so complete was the physical prostration felt by all, that the royal command met with imperfect execution.

In the midst of these calamities preparation was made for the removal of Madame from Fontainebleau to Romorentin, in Berry; which castle, the scene of some of the happiest hours of her youth, she expressed a longing desire to visit. Marguerite ventured to write to Montmorency, that he might inform the king of their intended movements. "The health of Madame is so variable that I know not what to say. If I had written yesterday my apprehensions, after seeing her in the state of extreme weakness into which she fell, and listening to her own sorrowful discourse, I should be obliged to-day to write and revoke my fears; for she passed a tolerable night, and declares that if she finds herself as well to-morrow morning she will quit this place, as we have been advised to do by our physicians and those who have visited Madame from Paris; for the danger here is so great that I dare not write to the king, nor to the queen, and scarcely to yourself, for fear that my letter may convey the infection." In the postscript to this letter, Marguerite adds this message to Madame de Montmorency:—"The poor plague-bound prisoners here, commend themselves to the prayers of Madame la marechâle."†

About the 19th of September, Marguerite and her mother quitted Fontainebleau. Madame travelled in her litter, reclining on pillows. She endured the journey remarkably well; and on her arrival at Grès, a little village close to Nemours, she appeared much less fatigued than had been anticipated. It had been arranged that the duchess should repose at Grès for a few days, to recruit before continuing her journey; it having been supposed that the unequal movement of her litter would occasion her great discomfort. The following day Madame continued in tolerable health, though suffering greatly at times from excruciating pain in the stomach. During the night her restlessness increased, and with feverish impatience she awaited the dawn of morning. Suddenly, it is related, the room became illuminated by a bright light. Louisa called to her attendants, and asked the reason why they had kindled so large a fire when the weather remained oppressively hot. They replied that there was very little fire in the chamber, but that it was the moon which shed the brilliant light. "How can that be?" exclaimed Madame, "the moon is on the wane, and she shines not at this hour!" She then rose in her bed, and drawing back the curtain, gazed earnestly upon the sky. Madame then perceived that the light proceeded from a large comet burning with clear radiance in the heavens, and pouring its rays on her bed. For some moments Louisa contemplated the sky in silence; she then murmured with emotion: "Ah! that is a sign which appears not to warn personages of mean condition: God sends it alone to admonish us, the great of the earth. Close the window," continued she, addressing her women, "it is a comet, which announces my speedy departure; I must prepare myself therefore for death!"* The duchess passed the remainder of the night in silent thought. The following morning early, she summoned her confessor, a Franciscan monk; and after she had confessed, she requested him to celebrate mass without delay. The physicians in attendance on Madame in vain assured her that her condition was not more perilous, in their opinion, than it had been for several days past. Louisa's only reply was to repeat several times: "If I had not myself gazed upon the omen of my decease, I would believe your words, for I do not yet feel the exhaustion of death." As the hours passed by, however, Madame gradually grew more feeble; for such was the effect of the disastrous impression made on a mind always inclined to superstition and weakened by disease by the comet, which she firmly believed appeared to betoken her departure. It was at this crisis that the queen of Navarre wrote the following letter to her brother, which reveals the distress and anxiety which then overpowered her. It appears, however, that the queen believed the assurances of the physicians that no immediate peril of death menaced Madame.

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* Mezeray,—Grande Histoire.

† MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 9127.

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* Brantôme. This was the famous comet of 1531, 1607, 1682, 1759.

Queen Marguerite to Francis I.

"Grèz-en-Gatinois, Monday, September 21st.

"Monseigneur,—I have not written to you very lately, being able to give you no certain news. The illness of Madame is very variable; at one time she appears to be at the point of death; at another, almost convalescent. I hoped that change of air might benefit her, especially as she thought so herself; but to tell you the truth, as you are pleased to place implicit trust in me, I perceive no amendment in her health. It is true, nevertheless, that on Saturday, the day she arrived here, she bore the movement of her litter well. Though she complained of not having quite comfortably reclined therein, she experienced on her arrival no return of sickness, nor did she take any remedy against the faintness which usually overpowers her. Yesterday she continued tolerably well, though suffering at intervals from her stomach. To-day I find her very feeble—more so than she has ever yet been—her voice is weak, and her breathing short and fitful; her words also are so mournful, that no one can listen to them unmoved. Some days she speaks thus; at other times her spirits are better. Nevertheless, monseigneur, I perceive that Madame is daily growing weaker. If I were to conceal this from you, I should not merit your regard; but I entreat you to believe that if, through your persuasion, she does not eat, and quickly recover her spirits, nothing exists in this world which can do her any good. I will not fail to send you word of any change in her condition. Monseigneur, I humbly commend myself to your gracious favour, and remain,

"Your very humble and obedient subject and sister,

"Marguerite."*

Madame attempted later in the day to partake of the Holy Communion, but it was found that she had not strength to swallow the wafer; but, at her mother's desire, Marguerite received the sacrament kneeling by the couch. It became then evident to all that the duchess could not survive the night; the agonizing pain that she suffered greatly increased, and her respiration became more laboured. The Host from the parish church was brought during the afternoon, at Louisa's desire, to her bedside by a procession of ecclesiastics, that she might adore it. Madame caused herself to be raised from her pillow, and fervently exclaimed: "Jesus, thou son of David, who suffered death on the cross for me, I adore thee, O my God and King, and I beseech of Thee the pardon of my sins!" The sacrament of extreme unction was afterwards administered, during which Madame joined in the responses. She then requested that a portion of the Gospel might be read aloud. While the reading continued Madame lay without movement, nor did she utter a word. This interval of comparative repose was followed by the return of the severe pains which her physicians had temporarily subdued. In her agony, Louise called repeatedly for her son; when she was told by her confessor that it was impossible for the king to reach Grès in time to bid her farewell, Madame wept aloud. "O my son," exclaimed she, "will thou fail me at this hour? Must I depart without embracing thee, and without bidding thee one last adieu?" After a silence of some minutes, Madame again said: "God has doubtless ordained this trial in wisdom; we neither of us could have endured the interview, for great is the love between us. I will think no more of my son; but may the Lord God bless and prosper him in all his undertakings, and console him when he mourns our separation." Mademoiselle de la Bourdàisière,* who stood by Marguerite at the tester of the bed, then gently placed a small crucifix on the lips of Madame. She kissed it, and whispered: "Thus was He, the only true friend, slain for my sins." Madame then drew her daughter fondly towards her; the sight of Marguerite's tears seemed to move her greatly. At length she said: "Marguerite, when I look upon you, my heart seems only to throb with the tender love I bear you, when it ought to be occupied by God alone. I pray you, therefore, withdraw for a little space from my side, that I may devote myself without hindrance to Him alone. One word only, m'amye—know, and let it give you comfort, that by the gift of God my heart clings now in faith to Him, and thus He gives me inward assurance of eternal salvation." Marguerite then hurriedly rose, and after pressing the trembling hand that clasped her own to her lips, she retired to a distant part of the room, and placed herself where she could watch Madame without being seen by her.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8595.

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* Marie Babou, daughter of the high treasurer, Babou de la Bourdaisière, one of Louisa's favourite maids of honour. Mademoiselle de la Bourdaisière espoused Claude de Beauvilliers, count de St. Aignan.

After Marguerite quitted her side, the thoughts of Louise seemed to be concentrated alone on the change which awaited her. Her confessor stood by the bed, and continued his exhortations. For some time Madame listened with signs of great outward humility; but at length, her strength being exhausted, she sank into a stupor, and seemed scarcely conscious of the movements of the persons round her bed. She was thoughtlessly roused again to temporary consciousness by the importunities of an old and favoured servant, who approached the bed, and besought his dying mistress to bestow a word of comfort and farewell on her disconsolate servants. Madame opened her eyes, and fixed them steadily on the suppliant; she then turned away her head, murmuring: "Cease to trouble me; my thoughts, henceforth, are above." Fearing that the intruder was about to renew his solicitation, Marguerite approached the bed, and it is recorded, uttered the following words: "Leave Madame in peace; she waits for the consummation of that glorious immortality, in comparison of which, children and servants are now less to her than the dust of the earth. God having so elevated her, is it to be wondered that earthly recollections fade in the presence of the glorious future before her!" A smile passed over the dying features of Madame, and she feebly articulated: "*Il est ainsi, m'amye.*" These are the last recorded words spoken by Louise. Soon after, the power of articulation failed her, though by signs she signified to Marguerite and her confessor that she was conscious of their presence. Drowsiness then supervened; and about two o'clock in the morning of the 22nd of September, 1531, Madame expired, so calmly, that Marguerite, who was watching beside her, knew not the precise moment of her mother's death.* The king received the news of Madame's decease when on his way to visit her at Grès; for he had hastily set out from Blois on the tidings sent him by his sister. The grief of Francis was overwhelming. With all her faults, Madame had been idolized by her two children, and her devotion to them merited no smaller return on their part. The king mourned not only a mother whose love had been boundless, but a counsellor whose wise and able administration had greatly contributed to the renown of his reign. The sceptre of France had passed imperceptibly from the hand of her son into that of Madame. Her great abilities never failed him in any emergency; and a feeling of dreary isolation smote the king, when he bethought himself that that great and politic spirit had fled for ever. The same feeling seemed to oppress the courtiers and the people, when the news of Madame's decease became known. With few exceptions, Louise had inspired little affection, for all dreaded the haughty unscrupulousness of her disposition; but her talents commanded confidence and respect; and all knew and acknowledged that a master-spirit directed the councils of France. Her death at this critical juncture was felt to be an additional calamity to the many then afflicting France; for though Madame was not personally deplored by her son's subjects, her decease created feelings of universal consternation. The two grave charges which history has perpetuated against Madame—her persecution of the constable de Bourbon, and the death of Semblancay, although this latter charge is far from being substantiated, and serves still as matter for discussion and inquiry to the historical student—combined to tarnish Louisa's reputation, and to inspire doubts respecting the integrity of her character. In weighing, however, the merits of the duchess d'Angoulême, it ought never, in candour, to be forgotten, that the woman who so admirably fulfilled the duties of a wife and mother, and who to the last moment of her existence retained the boundless love and reverence of her children, accomplished and superior as were Francis and Marguerite, could not have been endowed with the repulsive and unamiable character which some historians have assigned to Louise de Savoie.

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* The above curious and interesting details of the decease of Madame are taken from a poem preserved in the Bibl. Royale, believed by many to have been composed by Marguerite herself. The title of the chronicle is "Les Prisons." It is thought by others to be the work of Guillaume Philander, a *protégé* of the queen of Navarre. The poem is classed amongst the works of Marguerite preserved in the Bibliothèque Royale; and all critics agree that it was written under the queen's immediate inspection, if not by herself.

Francis hastened to Fontainebleau, where his sister had retired, for he well knew how overwhelming must be Marguerite's affliction; besides, it was a consolation to him to mingle his grief with hers. She had shared the love of Madame with himself, and, his children excepted, Marguerite was now her brother's greatest solace. The vicissitudes of his kingly career had never effaced from the mind of Francis the remembrance of the joyous days of his boyhood, and of the mimic court of Amboise, presided over by the beautiful and brilliant Louise. He recalled his mother's sacrifices, and the deep solicitude with which she had watched his own and Marguerite's progress in learning—and the companionship of his gifted sister with all its delights, when yet the links of that "loyal trinity" which bound the three, had suffered no strain from the world and its sorrows. Inconsolable for their loss, Francis and Marguerite wept together; the grief they felt was sacred between themselves, and could be participated in by none. Numerous are the poetical effusions by which Francis and his sister sought to solace their grief. Soon after the death of Madame, Francis wrote thus:—

Que direz vous la France? en quel plainct honorable
Pourrez-vous regretter celle tant proffitable,
Non seullement à vous qui estiez ses amys,
Voyant quelle louenge elle a des enemys?
N'a-elle soustenu, par son sens et prudance,
L'effort de tout malheur venant à vous la France?
Respondez moi et dictes, pleurans en verité,
Que bien elle a de tous dueil et loz merité!
O cueur qui ne sentez de femme que le nom!
Invincible vertu, tant digne de renom,
Tant craincte n'enemys, des vostres plus aymée,
Des mechans le contraire, et des bons estimée,
Qui avez triumphé du malheur triumphant,
En saulvant nostre honneur, paix, et vostre enfant![*]

Francis and Marguerite, after making a brief sojourn at Fontainebleau, removed to Chantilly, the magnificent ancestral abode of the marshal de Montmorency, who had just inherited it from his father, whose death occurred two months before that of his royal mistress, the duchess d'Angoulême. The mortal remains of Madame were carefully embalmed, and transported to Paris, to be finally interred in the mausoleum erected by Francis for his family in the cathedral of St. Denis. Her heart was enclosed in a leaden coffer, and buried at the foot of the steps of the high altar in the church of Notre Dame. A small brass plate covered the tomb, on which was engraven the arms of France and Savoy; beneath was a heart surmounted by a crown, and these lines:—

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[*] Epitaphe de Madame la duchesse d'Angoulême. Docum. sur la Cap. de François I.

> Cor magnorum opifex, Francum quæ viscera Regem
> Portavere hic sunt, spiritus in superis.*

Louisa died possessed of great wealth. In her coffers was found the enormous sum of fifteen hundred thousand gold crowns. The large estates assigned to her by Francis out of the spoil of the constable de Bourbon, reverted to the dauphin. A considerable portion of the treasure returned to the coffers of the state, and the remainder of Madame's wealth the king relinquished to his sister. The duchess during her life bestowed numerous benefactions on the church, and on various monastic communities in the realm. She was a great patroness of the convents of the Minimes, established at Chastelleraud, Amboise, and Plessis-les-Tours by Louis XI., and his son Charles VIII.; and her donations to the monastery, and church of La Sainte Beaume† in Provence, caused her name to be enrolled in the list of the chief benefactors of that celebrated community. After the funeral obsequies of Madame, medals were struck in her honour, and liberally distributed. One side of the medal bore the effigy of Louise, and the reverse the inscription, "Ludovica, Francisci et Margaritæ parens."* For many months after her death, the praise of Louisa continued to afford a theme for the inspiration of all the court poets and rhymesters throughout the kingdom. One poet more daring than his compeers in poetic flights, causes the duchess to address an epistle in verse to her son from her blissful altitude. He supposes that she had obtained permission to peruse the volume of Fate; Madame therefore writes to advertise her son of the future destinies of many of his contemporaries. The account given by Louise of what she had read in that portentous book concerning her daughter, runs thus:—

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* At the end of the seventeenth century, the high altar of the cathedral of Nôtre Dame was taken down, and a new one constructed. The tomb containing Louisa's heart was then opened. The leaden coffer was found to be in perfect preservation; it was half a foot square, and bore the inscription given above. The coffer was afterwards carefully replaced by the workmen; and it is to be hoped that the heart of Louise escaped being rifled from its tomb by the sacrilegious violence of the demagogues of the great revolution, and that it still reposes at the foot of the grand altar at Nôtre Dame.

† La Sainte Beaume is a cluster of rocky hills, situated between Aix and Marseilles. In the most elevated part of the hills is a grotto, in which, according to the legend, Mary Magdalene passed thirty years in the exercise of austere penitence. The grotto of the saint was closed by a strong grate of iron from the profane scrutiny of the curious or the sceptical: within the cave several torches were kept burning night and day. Amongst other wonders shown by the monks of the monastery close at hand was a miraculous fountain which never dried up; and a lofty column, which, they averred, marked the spot where the saint was raised in the air seven times a day by angels. The monastery was founded by a bishop of Mende, and afforded accommodation for twenty Jacobin monks.

> Bien voulus voir l'endroit et le passage
> De Marguerite humaine, douce et sage,
> Auquel j'ai lu les grâces et promesses
> Dont heureuse est entre toutes princesses.
> Pallas me dit qu'elle fut sa nourrice
> Et que Dieu l'a eslue sa tutrice.
> De ceste cour elle est tant désirée,
> Qu'on la vondroit jà du corps séparée.
> Je te supply vers elle entretenir
> Ta bonne amour, et près toy la tenir,
> Et que luy sois bon frère, et elle sœur.
> Bien t'en prendra, de ce je te fais seur.

From Chantilly, Francis wrote to announce the intelligence of the decease of his mother to the emperor Charles V., and to his ambassador at Rome, the bishop of Auxerre, that the latter might communicate it to the pope. The king imparts his affliction to the emperor in the following words, which were more politic than true. "Most high, mighty, and excellent prince, our dearly beloved brother, cousin, and ally, we commend ourselves most cordially to your affection: inasmuch as the greatest solace that a man fallen into affliction can have, is to reveal the cause of his mourning to his chief friends, that he may find comfort by their condolence, we have not delayed to advertise you of the decease of our very dear and loved lady and mother, whom may God pardon. We know that these tidings will be very sorrowful and heavy news to you; but in all we must resign ourselves to the will of God."* Charles, in his reply, showed himself not one whit behind his adroit rival in the arts of diplomatic courtesy. He despatched the Sieur de Ballançon to the court of France to condole with Francis, and to deliver letters written with his own hand to the king and to the queen. "I have despatched the Sieur de Ballançon, a gentleman of my household, to visit you on my behalf, and to condole with you on the decease of your good mother, to whom may God show mercy, knowing, my brother, that you must be enduring extreme regret for her loss. I also grieve for her decease, as much on your account, and for the maintenance of peace, as for my own sake—for I ever looked upon her as a second mother. But as this misfortune has been decreed by the will of God, and is therefore irremediable, we must submit. I pray you let your fortitude and magnanimity temper the grief which your filial affection inspires, in the hope that as she restored peace in this world, by promoting our reconciliation and friendship, she may find it ready prepared for her above, where may she enjoy everlasting repose."†

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* Guichenon,—Hist. de la Maison de Savoye.

When the honours rendered to the memory of Madame terminated, Marguerite yielded to the solicitations of her husband, and prepared to accompany him into Béarn. The king, absorbed in political questions of the most perplexing description, and ever animated by his secret hostility to the emperor, made many objections before he gave his sister the permission to depart, which she steadily solicited. Marguerite's chief inducement to visit Béarn was, that there she could tranquilly pursue her theological studies, undisturbed by the violence of the bigots of the universities. The king of Navarre also felt aggrieved that Francis showed so little anxiety to fulfil the promise he had made when he gave him his sister in marriage, to the effect that he would compel the emperor, by arms or negotiation, to restore the kingdom of Navarre to the house of Albret. During the negotiations preceding the signature of the treaty of Cambray, no notice had been taken of Henry's claim; and since that treaty, the draft of a document relative to the release of the princes, which, however, had never been executed, fell into the hands of the king of Navarre, where in one clause it was stipulated on behalf of Francis "that although the king of Navarre had espoused his beloved and only sister, yet he was content to promise the emperor neither to aid nor to favour Henry in his designs for the recovery of his kingdom."* The arrogant and presuming deportment of the marshal de Montmorency was, moreover, displeasing to the king of Navarre, whose high spirit chafed when he witnessed the influence, so superior to his own, exercised by the marshal over his royal master. It appears that Henry had inconsiderately suffered himself to be drawn into the cabals between Montmorency and the Admiral de Brion, which still convulsed the court. Although he was aware of the friendship subsisting between his royal consort and the marshal, Henry, from a sentiment of pique towards Montmorency—to whose counsels he attributed the king's lukewarmness—gave this secret countenance to Brion's faction. Always accustomed to the smiles and the sunshine of royal favour, Montmorency never forgave Henry this temporary defection. His obsequious homage to the queen of Navarre, nevertheless, diminished not; for he knew her power with her royal brother, and the sword of constable of France, that object of his ambition, had never left its sheath since the day that Bourbon bore it before the king on the departure of Francis from the town of Moulins, in 1517. Being sincerely attached to her impetuous and volatile husband, Marguerite supported him with all her power at court. Aware that her own dignity was best secured by promoting his, the queen paid Henry most reverential respect in public. When he entered the room where she happened to be seated with her ladies, or attended by the court, Marguerite invariably rose from her chair, that she might herself set the example of the deference which she expected the courtiers to pay to her husband. In Henry's presence, Marguerite used often to abstain from discussing theology and literature with the learned professors invited by Francis to his table, because she knew that her husband, though attached to letters, did not like to hear women argue learned questions.* Francis showed himself sometimes angrily impatient at the deference which his sister paid to her husband; and the jealousy he conceived of the king of Navarre possibly contributed, without any undue influence on the part of Montmorency, to indispose Francis to aid the projects of his brother-in-law for the recovery of his patrimony.

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* Bibl. du Roi., MSS. de Béth., No. 8477. Published by M. Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

† Papiers D'Etat du Cardinal de Granvelle., No. 130.

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* MS. de Béth., No. 8546.

The royal pair, therefore, took leave of Francis about the commencement of the winter season, and journeyed to Nérac. The king insisted, however, that the little princess Jane of Navarre should remain under his guardianship at the court of France, instead of accompanying her parents to their home in Béarn. The young princess was an especial favourite of her royal uncle, who used to bestow upon her as much notice as on his own children; indeed Francis always treated his sister's child as a daughter of France, equal in rank to the princesses, his daughters. The lively frolics of the fair little princess, whose features bore a strong resemblance to those of her royal mother, delighted Francis; and his indulgence soon won him a strong place in Jane's affection. The princess, as she grew older, never relinquished the privilege she soon acquired of saying what she pleased to her uncle with impunity; and at several eventful periods of her after-life, this liberty proved a great advantage. Jane also early showed great attachment to her father, who was very proud of her; so that between his indulgence and that of Francis, the child, but for her fine and noble disposition, narrowly escaped being spoiled; and so apparent became this fact, that the courtiers bestowed on *la petite Madame Jeanne*, the soubriquet of "*la mignonne des rois.*"†

Besides the fondness felt by Francis for his infant niece, political motives rendered him unwilling to permit her to quit his dominions. The king was well aware of his brother-in-law's ardent desire to regain his hereditary dominions of Upper Navarre, usurped by the crown of Spain; and of his discontent that his interests had been overlooked in the treaty of Cambray. Jane was the heiress of her father's dominions in the south of France, —comprehending the principality of Béarn, and the rich counties of Foix Armagnac, Albret, Bigorre, and Comminges, over which, in the event of his death, she would reign with the title of queen; a dowry altogether not unworthy the acceptance of the first crowns in Europe. The rumour, therefore, reached the ear of Francis, that the emperor had opened secret negotiations with Henry for the future union of the young princess with his eldest son Philip; when Navarre being, by this alliance, virtually confirmed to the crown of Spain, Charles professed himself willing to make great present concession to the House of Albret. The emperor had further stipulated, it was reported, that the young heiress of Navarre should be delivered to his custody, that she might be educated at Toledo with her future spouse. Not all the assurances and protestations of Marguerite could allay this suspicion when it had once affixed itself in the mind of Francis. He believed firmly that his sister was no participator in the scheme for establishing the standard of the Hapsburg on the soil of France; but he felt not equal trust in the loyal devotion of the king of Navarre. It was, nevertheless, with great reluctance that Marguerite consented to leave her daughter behind; but the influence and persuasions of her brother at length prevailed: perhaps, also, she was not sorry to leave with Francis during her absence, a little representative who would constantly recall her to his thoughts. The consent of the king of Navarre, however, was not so easily obtained; but Francis, disdaining in his case to use persuasion, decided the matter by his sovereign authority. The royal castle of Plessis-les-Tours was assigned to the princess Jeanne and her household by the king. Madame de Silly retained her post of governess to the princess; but Marguerite, notwithstanding her daughter's tender years, thought it expedient to appoint as her preceptor the poet Nicholas de Bourbon. A steward of the princess's household was likewise nominated, and a chaplain appointed to superintend her religious studies. It has been asserted that Marguerite caused her daughter to be educated in the Protestant faith: this, however, cannot be a fact, for the princess Jeanne never left the guardianship of Francis until her marriage; and the king's hatred of the sectarians augmented as the political difficulties increased, occasioned by the spread of their principles. Marguerite herself never formally entered that communion; thus, though her example and conversation when in her daughter's society, eventually predisposed the mind of the princess to imbibe the opinions of the reformers, the queen of Navarre had it not in her power, even if she desired it, to make so public an avowal of her defection from the Romish creed, as the appointment of Lutheran preceptors to conduct the education of the princess Jane would then have been considered.

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* Charles de Ste. Marthe. Oraison Funèbre de la Reine de Navarre.

† Cayet,—Chron. Novenaire.

Marguerite, with her husband, paid a brief visit to the princes at Amboise, on her road into Béarn. The young dauphin overwhelmed his aunt with caresses, being delighted to see her again. The courteous efforts of the prince to make her sojourn at Amboise agreeable to her, amused and enchanted the queen. The dauphin alone inherited of all the sons of Francis, that graceful suavity and chivalrous frankness of deportment distinguishing the king. The duke of Orleans was sullen, taciturn, and easily offended. The duke d'Angoulême inherited many of the worst traits of his father's character, without the brilliant qualities which in Francis redeemed much that was evil. He was rash, violent-tempered, and obstinate. Spoiled by the continual indulgence of his father and Madame, the young duke's wild adventures afterwards embroiled the court, and occasioned serious perplexity to the king. Marguerite expressed herself as being much pleased with her visit to her nephews. "I cannot permit my messenger to describe to you, Monseigneur, the excellent condition in which we found M. le dauphin, and his courteous manner and discourse, without a word from me to assure you that never have I before seen him appear to so great advantage. In the short period since I saw him, he has made such rapid improvement that I believe he will in time become your second self—a perfection which all those who love you must desire to witness. He invited me to sup with him, and even offered to relinquish his bed and his chambers for my use; he gave us, moreover, such courteous and hearty welcome, that it seemed to me as if he were determined in your absence to imitate your gracious bearing."* The king was very proud of his eldest son. Lefèvre and the other learned men employed in the education of the princes had reported great things of the dauphin's talent and aptitude for learning; but the natural gravity of the prince's disposition, increased by the dreary loneliness of the hours he had passed in captivity in Spain, rendered his society less pleasing to Francis than that of the merry and daring prince Charles.

A most enthusiastic welcome awaited Marguerite and her husband on their arrival in Gascony. Lefèvre, Gérard Roussel, Clément Marot, and Farel, all assembled to greet the queen at Nérac, and to offer her their devoted thanks for the refuge she had afforded them. Marguerite appointed Gérard Roussel, upon whom she had already bestowed the abbey of Clairac in Agenois, to be one of her chaplains in ordinary. Also, with the consent of her husband, she authorized him to use publicly the missal, which she had caused to be translated into French and revised by the bishop of Senlis, not only in the royal chapels of Pau and Nérac, but in every church and cathedral throughout the dominions of the king of Navarre. In this book of prayers, translated at first for her own private use, Marguerite had caused all allusion to the mediation of the Virgin Mary and the saints, to be suppressed; in the prayers and invocations addressed to the Holy Virgin, the name of Mary was erased, and that of God† substituted. This was a bold proceeding on the part of the queen of Navarre, especially in the face of the incensed universities, who were jealously watching her movements, and who had not forgotten the grudge they owed her for the inopportune publication of her poem, "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse." Marguerite had not been at home many weeks before she sanctioned another grave innovation on the established ceremonies of the Romish Church, by permitting Roussel to preach in his cassock before the court at Nérac. She also assigned a noble pension to Lefèvre, and appointed him to an honorary office in her household, one which gave him the privilege to dine daily at the royal table.

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* F. de Béth., MS. Bibl. du Roi., No. 8546.

† Théod. de Beze,—Hist. des Eglises Reformées de France.

These innovations, and the disregard with which the queen of Navarre treated their repeated remonstrances, enraged the theologians of the capital, and caused them to entertain deep distrust of the ultimate designs of Francis. The stern chancellor cardinal, also, seemed to behold with indifference the flagrant infringement of the canons of his celebrated council throughout Béarn. Roussel, Lefèvre, Clément Marot, Calvin, Farel, and a host of minor delinquents, converted monks and priests, banished from France by the decrees of Sens, found refuge, pensions, and consideration, at the court of Nérac. They were all honourably received, and commended by Marguerite herself, "that learned queen," says the enthusiastic historian Olhagaray, "the first in the world, that perfect instrument, who valiantly delivered her brother from captivity, and who was so greatly addicted to study, but especially to meditation on the Holy Scriptures."* The fearlessness displayed by queen Marguerite at this period of her life, in the steady protection and countenance she bestowed on the disciples of Luther and Calvin, has naturally raised great doubt of the sincerity of the zeal then so cruelly evinced by Francis in behalf of the Church of Rome. Marguerite, so obedient, so devoted a sister as she ever proved herself to be, would scarcely have presumed to render her husband's dominions a refuge for the heretics, whom her brother's edicts proscribed, had she not felt conviction that his displeasure would not be kindled by such an act on her part. Neither was Francis the prince to permit his edicts to be violated with impunity, even by his idolized sister; and we cannot but doubt that a word of censure from his lips would have closed the principality of Béarn to the Lutheran refugees. Lord paramount over Béarn and its dependencies, the king of France possessed legal power to enforce on his vassal the titular sovereign of Navarre, obedience to the decrees of the privy council relative to the schism in the church, which was rending Europe into factions. At that day, when politics and religion blended, when the one could not be separated from the other, the suspicion of the Sorbonne and the parliament that the king's ultimate designs were hostile to the ancient privileges so long exercised by the papacy, was not unreasonable, perceiving as they did the signal countenance afforded to heresy by the queen of Navarre, who notoriously possessed greater influence over the mind of Francis than all his family and ministers combined.

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* Olhagaray,—Hist. de Foix, Béarn, et Navarre.

Marguerite and Henry, before they settled for the winter in their picturesque castle of Pau, resolved, notwithstanding the lateness of the season, to make a royal progress through a portion of their dominions.. Wise and beneficent schemes for the prosperity of their subjects occupied the mind of the sovereigns; for it was the ambition of both Marguerite and her husband to convert the barren and uncultivated lands of Béarn into a garden, fair as the queen had witnessed in the luxuriant midland provinces of France. The inhabitants of Béarn, however, knew little about agriculture; they led a rude life, were impatient of restraint, and loved hunting the bear and the chamois in their mountain fastnesses better than the sight of verdant fields, or crops. For the better instruction of the Béarnois, the king of Navarre invited a number of master agriculturists and labourers from the provinces of Bretagne and Saintonge to settle in Béarn. Some were taken into the king's service, to cultivate the domains of the crown; others were gratified and rewarded by small grants of land.* Anxious for the advance of their subjects in trade and industry, Henry and Marguerite next established a large cloth manufactory in the town of Nai, and granted some important privileges for the sale of the cloth woven at this royal loom.† Marguerite was enthusiastically received in every district which she visited. Her condescension struck the rude, but loyal Béarnois with admiration; and as she had now obtained complete mastery over the dialect of the country, the queen granted audience to all who solicited admission to her presence. When any petition was presented to her, it was Marguerite's habit to receive such courteously, and, when time permitted, to read it herself in the presence of the suppliant, that she might address to him any question she desired to ask. The queen then delivered the petition to an officer of her household, declaring her pleasure thereon, which she strictly commanded him to execute without unnecessary delay.* Marguerite's charity to the poor also was extensive; and she often caused money to be distributed by her almoner, Gérard Roussel, to the crowds of indigent persons who gathered together in the streets and on the roads to see her pass. It was her custom, likewise, to visit the sick and the aged at their own abodes. Often, when her chaplains reported any circumstance of peculiar distress, Marguerite, without imparting her design, quitted her palace of Pau or Nérac, and followed by one attendant visited the sufferers, to inquire herself into the particulars of their case. She frequently sent her own physicians to attend the sick, and relieved them by gifts of money and other necessaries. Neither was it a rare sight to witness queen Marguerite herself ministering to the religious instruction of her poorer subjects. Many did she cheer by her Christian exhortation; and console by the glad tidings she was able to impart from the Scriptures, a book which she daily studied.†

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* Olhagaray,—Hist. de Béarn et Navarre.

† Ibid.

The sympathy she felt for their welfare endeared Marguerite greatly with the people of Béarn. Even her religious tendencies were not displeasing to them; for the pope maintained very slender hold on their spiritual allegiance. It was in virtue of the papal interdict launched by pope Julius II., that Ferdinand the Catholic invaded and conquered the kingdom of Navarre, a possession which had been ever since attached to the crown of Spain. A deep hatred, therefore, against the see of Rome, which had humiliated their sovereigns and depressed their national prosperity, animated the Béarnois. Thus their antipathy to Rome disposed the minds of Henry's subjects to receive with favour those whom the Church persecuted, as fellowship generally exists between parties tracing their wrongs to the same source. The reformers first received protection and welcome in Béarn; afterwards, the purity of their lives and the simplicity of their faith recommended their teaching to the hearts of the simple people, who knew nothing of the subtle theories and technicalities of the schoolmen.

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* Ste. Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre de la Reine de Navarre.

† Ibid.

At Pamiers, a venerable doctor, much renowned in his own country for his theological writings, named Elias, presented himself to pay his respects to queen Marguerite. Discoursing with him one day on religious topics, and especially on the Holy Scriptures, Marguerite impressively exhorted the doctor never to allow a day to pass without earnestly studying that sacred book; "for," said she, "this study conveys to our souls participation in the Divine Essence; and is therefore a faithful preservative against all kinds of woe, and the wicked temptation of the devil."* Great must have been the good achieved by Marguerite's example. In these days of theological dispute, when learned men did little else than anathematize those of opposite opinions to themselves, and the purest truths of the Gospel were too often promulgated in the form of hostile manifestoes, the spectacle of the lowly and devout deportment invariably maintained by the queen of Navarre failed not to plead powerfully in favour of her creed.

The Christmas of the year 1531 was spent by Marguerite and her husband at Pau. We find them, during the early months of the following year, occupied in the reformation of the criminal code of the principality. The frequent absences of the sovereign, and the consequent irregular administration of justice, had occasioned great disorders throughout the country; so that neither fairs, markets, nor public assemblies of any kind, could be holden without disturbances, which not unfrequently terminated in bloody brawls, and even by assassinations. To remedy these grievances, Henry established a court to take sole and special cognizance of crimes committed against the public peace. The chamber was composed of one president and four counsellors, who were sworn to administer justice with strict impartiality and vigilance.† Under the firm administration of the king of Navarre, the lawless aggressions, which before had rendered life and property insecure, diminished; and the people learned to respect and to render willing obedience to the laws, when they perceived that the same penalties awaited the noble who violated them, as themselves. Henry was inflexible in rendering equal justice: the rank of the offender, or even the most influential intercession made on his behalf, was never suffered to arrest the execution of the laws. The Bishop of Lescar, Jacques de Foix, came one day to petition the king to spare the life of a gentleman, a near relative of his own, condemned for some flagrant act of outrage. As it happened to be Good Friday, the bishop, to enhance his suit, implored Henry to perform this act of clemency for the honour of Jesus Christ, who on that day suffered a cruel death to save sinners. Henry permitted the bishop to conclude his address, and then gravely replied: "Mon cousin,—God has commanded us to administer justice by the punishment of the wicked; He would be dishonoured and not honoured, if at your solicitation I abetted the evil-doer, instead of obeying this righteous command. I purpose, therefore, by suffering justice to take its course, and by consigning the guilty to condign chastisement, to render to God the only honour befitting His acceptance."* Another day a gentleman of Henry's household warmly solicited his royal master to grant a pardon to one whom he called a friend of his, who had been convicted before the criminal chamber for some grave misdemeanour. Detecting something suspicious in the over-anxiety and *empressement* of his suppliant's manner, the king demanded of his attendant what bribe he had accepted as the price of his intercession. Confused by the quiet inquiring glance bent upon him, the young cavalier replied without further evasion that the friends of the culprit had promised to give him a fine Spanish horse, in case he was fortunate enough to procure the pardon desired. To show his contempt of the spirit so ready to sacrifice principle for gain, the king immediately commanded one of his officers to present the cavalier with a horse from the royal stables; he then sternly forbad him, as he had obtained his wish, to importune him in future with similar petitions.† The king furthermore published several admirable edicts for the repression of vice, and for the chastisement of vagabonds and beggars; who, on their second apprehension and conviction were, without benefit of appeal, to be punished by the infliction of a certain number of stripes.

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* Olhagaray,—Hist. de Foix, Béarn, et Navarre.

† Ibid. Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges et Vies des Reynes, &c.

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* Olhagaray,—Hist. de Foix, Béarn, et Navarre.

† Ibid.

Having thus provided for the equal and efficient administration of justice, Henry next assembled the States of the principality, to confer with them on a plan for the better regulation of the finances, and for the repeal of certain laws which impeded the designs of the legislature. The ecclesiastical abuses prevalent in Béarn, as elsewhere, came under the discussions of the states; but this question was so fraught with bitterness and controversy, that the assembly did little more than record it. By the advice of the states, Henry commenced the fortification of Navarrcins, a town situated in the centre of a fertile plain, and watered by the Gave d'Oleron.*

As Navarreins was but a few hours' journey from Pau, where Marguerite then resided, she took a lively interest in the progress of the works. Henry caused the town to be surrounded by walls of immense strength; the fortifications formed a square, and high towers were constructed at the four angles. The condition of the "*drapperie*" at Nai, which town was likewise situated at a moderate distance from Pau, afforded ceaseless interest to the king and queen of Navarre during their sojourn in Béarn.

In the spring of the year 1532, Marguerite commenced the formation of the park and the gardens attached to the castle of Pau. Her love of flowers was great; and her garden at Alençon had been pronounced "un paradis terrestre." When sojourning at Fontainebleau, the queen seems never weary of expatiating on the beauty of its "delicious gardens and groves;" and her great delight was to watch the progress of the out-door works both there and at the castle of Blois. Francis sent his sister several very skilful gardeners from France to aid in her design. Throughout the spring and summer months of this year, Marguerite's chief recreation was the embellishment of her palace and gardens, in which she regularly employed a number of poor persons who could not procure work elsewhere. "The newly married sovereigns resolved to leave Béarn in a very different condition to that in which they found it," says De Coste.[*] "The country, though fertile and productive, remained barren and uncultivated through the neglect of its inhabitants; but under the administration of the sovereigns its aspect soon changed for the better. They invited from France a numerous company of labourers, mechanics, and engineers, who cultivated and drained the country. They embellished and fortified their towns, and built magnificent palaces and castles. Amongst other designs accomplished by them, they enlarged the castle of Pau, and surrounded it by gardens the most fanciful and beautiful in Europe. After thus providing suitable accommodation for themselves, they re-established order in the police regulations of the principality, providing security to life and property, and for the proper observance of the laws. They established a chamber to judge suits both criminal and civil; and from the decrees of this court they suffered no appeal. They undertook the reformation also of Le Fors d'Oleron, a local court, which for many years had fallen into great disrepute for its venality and corruptions. Altogether, the sovereigns, by their example and excellent deportment, contributed much to civilize the people. To defend themselves against a second invasion from Spain, and to place their capital in comparative security, Henry and Marguerite fortified the town of Navarreins, a place situated on the river Gave; and constructed strong ramparts, bastions, and towers, in the fashion then most approved of throughout Europe."

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* Olhagaray,—Hist. de Béarn et Navarre.

Amidst these varied occupations, Marguerite did not lay aside her pen. At this period of her life it was occupied almost exclusively in the controversy between the Romish and Reformed churches. Her hatred of monachism is developed in the acrimonious language of her satires on the monks and friars in the pages of the Heptaméron, which continued to occupy, at intervals, her leisure hours. Their profligate morals, and the scandals current respecting many of the most eminent conventual establishments in France, are recorded by Marguerite without an attempt to modify the heinous and repulsive details. The manners of the age tolerated the open exposure of an evil which was felt to be intolerable by men of every degree and belief; and doubtless Marguerite conceived that she was rendering good service to the cause of reform, by her witty delineations of the corrupt practices sanctioned under the Romish system. The zeal which animated her against the members of the Sorbonne—men who dishonoured religion by their cupidity and ambition, and who burned and proscribed, not out of love for their faith, but because the principles they denounced humbled their own arrogant pretensions—may have tempted Marguerite to overstep the bounds of that decorum in her descriptions so rigidly observed by her in her other compositions. At this period Marguerite was the only person throughout her brother's realm who could venture to uphold the doctrine of the reformers, without the certainty of being cast into the nearest diocesan prison, there to await death, or to accept the sin and shame of a public, and, in many cases, a compulsory recantation. Of all strife, that engendered by religious controversy is most reckless and virulent; Marguerite's act, therefore, must be deemed worthy of every extenuation, if in her indignation and anguish at the cruel persecution to which the reformers were subject, her pen too freely yet faithfully exposed the vices and wickedness of their oppressors. In her poem of "The Inquisitor," which opens with the most satirical *exposé* of the motives actuating the members of the terrible chamber instituted in France during the regency of Louise de Savoie, Marguerite causes the hero of the piece, the Inquisitor, to sum up the principles of his fraternity in the following lines—an argument which from its literal truth, was little calculated to heal the hostility existing then between the learned Faculty and herself:—

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[*] Hilarion de Coste. Eloges et Vies des Reines et Princesses Illustres.

L'INQUISITEUR COMMENCE.

"Bons et maulvais, la chose est claire et ample,
J'envoye au feu quant me sont presentez;
Je n'ay regard seulement qu'à l'exemple,
Et ne me chault de tous les tourmentez.
Assez de gens se sont mal contantez
De ma rigueur, mais je n'en faiz que rire;

Je n'ay nul soing, fors que bien augmentez
Soient de par moy les moyens de martire.
Si quelque amy de ma façon cruelle,
Par charité pense de m'advertir,
Je luy respondz: 'las! amy, c'est le zelle
Que j'ay de faire hors du pays sortir
Ceulz qui peuvent le peuple divertir
D'estre subgectz de nostre saincte Eglise.'
Le noir en blanc ainsi sçay convertir;
Car ma fureur en zelle je desguyse.
De tous leurs dictz ne me chault pas d'un double:
Je n'ay regard qu' aux biens que je reçoy.
Ce m'est tout un qui s'en courrousse ou trouble.
Je impugne ceulx qui sonstiennent la foy
De la bonne euvre. J'en parle bien, mais quoy?
Je n'en veulx poinct la peine et l'exercisse.
Rien ne vault suis, et contrefaiz le bon;
Mais il n'y a creature si fyne
(S'elle ne sçait m'appaiser d'un bon don),
Que ne luy face ou bien porter bourdon,
En quelque long, et penible voyage,
Ou demander en chemise pardon,
Ou bien mourrir par le feu ou en caige."

About this period, Marguerite, aided by most of the reformed ecclesiastics who had found refuge in Béarn, drew up that confession of faith which she afterwards presented to her brother, beseeching him to restore peace to Christendom by enforcing its adoption on the Gallican churches. This summary of faith was called "La Messe à Sept Points," because in seven of its articles it differed in doctrine and practice from the Church of Rome. In accordance with the principles instilled into her mind by the bishop of Meaux, Marguerite desired that the reformation should be eventually sanctioned by the Romish Church itself; so that the opinions of the reformers, after judicious modification, might be incorporated into the creed of Rome, rather than by a total severance of the two churches to perpetuate schism. But Marguerite's design had been that of the august but unprofitable assemblies of Constance and Bâle; such was, besides, the secret aim of the emperor Charles V., in his importunate and as yet unavailing demands to the Holy See for the assembly of a general council. As usual, the temporal interests of the popedom were permitted to prevail over the spiritual. The question which had convulsed Europe during the sessions of Bâle was again agitated, and still undecided—"Was the pope subject to the decrees of a general council? or, on the contrary, was the ratification of the supreme pontiff requisite to render such decrees valid?" This obstacle, and vexatious questions, relative to the locality of the council, and the precedency to be observed there, had been suffered to delay the measure. The evil urgently needing repression meantime increased in magnitude, and party spirit so aggravated affairs, that men who before, for the sake of peace and Christian unity, would have conceded much, warned by the consequences of the failure of previous deliberations, became too bitterly hostile to render compromise possible.

Marguerite, we are told, daily studied the Bible, under the guidance of Gérard Roussel and of his brother Arnaud, one of the most eminent of the reformed teachers, and also a refugee in Béarn. Roussel used frequently to preach before the queen; as did also a Carmelite monk, named Solon, discarded by his community for his heretical opinions. This personage, if his enemies are to be credited, was very undeserving of the patronage he obtained; or to become the associates of such men as Lefèvre and Roussel. After flying from his monastery, which was situated in the diocese of Tarbes, this Solon seems to have led a wandering and a profligate life, notorious for the furious hostility of his attacks on Rome and the priesthood, until his character of a persecuted Lutheran obtained for him admittance amongst Marguerite's chaplains. His discourses before the queen, which were usually violent diatribes against the ecclesiastical orders, did Marguerite much needless injury, before his intemperate zeal at length compelled her to dismiss him.*

The king of Navarre, meantime, participated in his consort's religious opinions to the degree, that though he observed more caution in his outward deportment towards the Church of Rome than she did, yet he forbad none of Marguerite's proceedings, and was generally present with her at the services she caused to be privately celebrated by Roussel. The queen, during the summer she spent in Béarn, wrote a sacred drama, probably her Drama of the

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* Florimond de Remond,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

Nativity, and caused it to be performed in the great hall of the castle of Pau, by a troop of Italian comedians whom she had engaged for the purpose. Between the acts of the drama, Marguerite, according to the taste of the day, had introduced pastoral interludes, then called "Bergeries," to enliven the representation. The actors, aware of the religious tendencies of their royal patroness, introduced in these dialogues, satirical ballads and *calembourgs* respecting Marguerite's foes, the monks; so that, says Remond,* "always some poor friar or monk figured in their comedy or farce: that it indeed seemed they could not take recreation without making mockery of God and his ministers." Henry countenanced these proceedings by being present with Marguerite at the representation of the drama, which naturally gave great offence to the Roman Catholic prelates of Béarn. Even Marguerite's devoted friend, the cardinal de Grammont, who, as bishop of Tarbes, had showed such zeal for her service, felt great resentment at what he considered a lamentable defection from the faith on the part of the sovereigns; and it is recorded that he addressed to them grave, though unavailing remonstrances, on several occasions. Marguerite, with that want of consistency so greatly to be lamented in her religious career, still retained her outward allegiance to Rome; as did also Roussel and Lefèvre. They clung to the hope that without a separation in the Church, reform might be accomplished. Other eminent prelates of France nourished the same delusion, and amongst their number was the king's confessor Guillaume Petit, bishop of Senlis. They expected the signal for this reformation to proceed from the supreme head of the Roman Church; while they waited, the season when it might have been accomplished, as respected the church in France, passed away; and the reaction which followed increased in a tenfold degree the ascendancy of the papacy.

Whilst queen Marguerite protected reform in Béarn, the most bloody persecution raged beyond the frontiers of the principality. At Toulouse, on Easter Sunday, 1532, the parliament commanded the arrest of more than twenty Lutherans. One person was burned alive with scarcely the form of a trial; the others were tortured to compel them to recant, and then banished with the confiscation of their goods.* At Rouen, Stephen Le Court, curé of Condé, was condemned to the flames for heresy by the bishop of Séez, a prelate, one of the chief members of the chamber of Inquisition. The curé appealed to his diocesan, the archbishop of Rouen, against this cruel sentence. The archbishop referred his writings to the Sorbonne, which, after examination, condemned sixty-four propositions in Le Court's theology as heretical. Two of the propositions thus condemned advocated the translation of the sacred books into the vernacular tongue; another recommended that tolerance should be observed towards heretics. As Le Court refused to make public recantation of his alleged heresy, he was first degraded from his ecclesiastical office by the archbishop of Rouen, and then by command of the parliament of Paris, delivered over to the secular arm, "that is to say," to use the words of the celebrated decree which established the chambers of Inquisition in France, "to the said parliament, the which, for the same, shall condemn such person to be burned alive."

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* Florimond de Remond,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

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* Bèze,—Hist. des Eglises Ref. de France.

CHAPTER V.

Rumoured alliance between Francis I. and the Sultan Soliman II.—Alarm this intelligence creates throughout Europe—Invasion of Hungary by the Turks in 1527—Embassy sent by Zapoli, vaivode of Transylvania, to king Francis—Its results—Charles V. requests the aid of the king of France to expel the Turks from his dominions—Reply of the king—Suspicions of the emperor—Correspondence between the emperor and the empress Isabel—Charles concludes an armistice with the Protestant League—Annexation of the Duchy of Bretagne to the French crown—Marguerite's return to Paris—Hostile attitude of the Sorbonne—The queen of Navarre is publicly assailed by a doctor of the Sorbonne—Marguerite's spirited remonstrances—The university disavows its orator—Deportment of the marshal de Montmorency—Correspondence between Marguerite and Montmorency—Factious conduct of Noel Béda—Marguerite's poem, Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse, is condemned by the Sorbonne—Anger of the king—The members of the Sorbonne are compelled to retract their censures—The bishop of Senlis undertakes to defend the queen of Navarre—Queen Marguerite is assailed by the theologians of the college of Navarre—She is represented by them on the stage of their college theatre—Francis commands the arrest of the personages concerned—Violent affray ensues—Arrest of the principal of the college and others—Their imprisonment in the Conciergerie—Marguerite implores for them the pardon of the king—Béda is banished from Paris—Dubious conduct of the marshal de Montmorency—Attack made upon the queen of Navarre by the Prior of Issoudun—His atrocious proposal respecting Marguerite—Decree sent by the king to the authorities of Issoudun—Seditious rising of the people—Its tragical result—Marguerite intercedes to save the life of the Prior—She obtains a commutation of his sentence—Secession of Oop, rector of the Sorbonne, from the Church of Rome—He escapes to Bale—Warrant issued by the parliament for the arrest of John Calvin—He makes his escape from Paris—Marguerite is solicited to protect Calvin—She procures a revocation of the order of arrest, and obtains permission for Calvin to reside at Angoulême—Reasons of his flight thence—Successful invasion of Hungary by the Turks—Interview between the emperor and the pope at Bologna—Francis I. despatches ambassadors to the conference—Proposes a marriage between Henry duke of Orleans and Clement's niece, Catherine de Medici—The return of the queen of Navarre to Nérac—Simplicity of her mode of life—Etiquette observed by Marguerite when she dined in public—Her courteous attention to the adherents of her brother—Her private occupations—Domestic happiness of Marguerite while in Béarn—The king of Navarre is prevailed upon by his consort to be present at the ministrations of Lefèvre and Roussel—Marguerite affords protection to two converted monks, Bertaut and Couraut—Their doctrine—Marguerite sanctions the assemblies of the protestants of Béarn, in a secret chamber appertaining to the royal mint at Pau—The king and queen of Navarre communicate according to the reformed ritual—The ill treatment which the queen is said by some to have received at this period from her husband, not confirmed by fact—The queen of Navarre negotiates the marriage of the princess Isabel with the viscount de Rohan—Her letter to king Francis on the subject—Marguerite takes a journey into Bretagne—She becomes the guest of the count de Chateaubriand—Marguerite projects the visit of Melancthon to Paris—She successfully influences her brother—Melancthon's ideas on reform agreeable to the queen of Navarre—The king offers the reformer a professorship in the university of Paris—The consent of the elector of Saxony to Melancthon's journey is obtained—His delay—Hostility of the Sorbonne, and the prelates of France—They condemn Melancthon's essay on reform—Pension granted by queen Marguerite to Claude Baduel, at the request of Melancthon—Negotiations for the marriage of Adrienne d'Estouteville, with the brother of the duke de Vendôme, confided to Marguerite—Her annoyance at this commission—Her correspondence on the subject with the king and with Montmorency—Marguerite receives a visit while at Argentan from Madame Catherine, abbess of the Holy Trinity at Caen.

During this interval, king Francis, indisposed in health, and depressed in spirits, made progresses through his kingdom. The loss of Madame was keenly felt by the king; for her vigorous counsels never seemed more needful than at this juncture. Often, likewise, did the thoughts of the king dwell reproachfully on his absent sister; and frequent were his solicitations that she would return to him. Marguerite seemed now the sole link which connected the present with the past—those bright and joyous days, the remembrance of which brought pleasurable, though regretful reminiscences to the king of his first gentle consort queen Claude; of Madame, with her stately dignity and devoted love; and of that gay and chivalrous court assembled during the first few years of his reign.

The duchess d'Estampes was the king's inseparable companion; her beauty, her lively temper, together with her deference for the queen of Navarre, combined to render her power over Francis almost absolute; while her ceaseless intercessions, in behalf of the persecuted Lutherans, often enabled the king to mitigate the rigorous measures adopted by Duprat, without appearing to make a deliberate sacrifice of consistency. Queen Eleanor resided chiefly with the king's daughters at St. Germain. The king scrupulously rendered her the honours due to her illustrious birth, and to the rank of one upon whose brow rested the crown matrimonial of France; but here the complaisance of Francis terminated. Yet the political *rôle* played by queen Eleanor during the first ten years after her marriage was not insignificant; and the devotion she displayed for the interests of her adopted country, merited a more grateful acknowledgment from Francis. The emperor, informed by his ambassadors of the alienation existing between the royal pair, took every measure to increase Eleanor's importance by making her, when possible, the medium of his communications to the French cabinet. In the instructions sent to his ambassador in Paris, which were generally written by Charles himself, the words constantly occur: "In the first place you will visit the queen of France, our very dear and honoured sister, and impart and advise with her upon the measures, &c." Eleanor earnestly desired to be the arbitrator of the differences existing between her husband and the emperor; she had recently attempted to negotiate an interview between the two monarchs, and to obtain from her brother a mitigation of some of the more rigorous articles of the treaty of Cambray. The jealousy conceived by the emperor at the secret countenance afforded by Francis to the League of Smalkalden, caused the queen's design to fail; this unsuccessful overture, however, had the unfortunate effect of still more embittering the relations between the sovereigns.

A rumour, meantime, spread over Europe, that the king of France, the enemy of Luther and his adherents, was engaged in secret and friendly negotiation with the Ottoman Porte. To form a just conception of the amazement and horror which this report created, it will be necessary to recal the prejudices, rooted and insurmountable, entertained then throughout the Christian world against the Turks. Every sentiment of religion, chivalry, and tradition, was violated by the alliance of a Christian power with the Infidels, the Pariahs of Europe, the anathematized of the Church, men who were denied the common rights of humanity by universal accord. In order to resist the encroachments of the Mussulmen, princes had suspended their divisions, and united their armaments with those of their bitterest opponents; while for the same holy cause, private individuals had devoted their treasures and their blood. To slay, or to be slain by an Infidel bestowed everlasting rewards; and the fierce Crusaders who perished in conflict under the walls of Jerusalem, were pronounced blessed by the Church, having nobly earned the palm of martyrdom. In 1532, Hungary was again threatened by a terrible invasion of the Turks. Vienna was menaced with destruction for the second time; and the symbol of the crescent appeared about to dominate over Germany. Louis, king of Hüngary and Bohemia, the brother-in-law of the emperor Charles V., had been slain in 1526, at the battle of Mohacz, defending himself against the Turks, who were commanded by their renowned sultan, Soliman II. As Louis left no children by his consort Mary, the crown of Hungary was claimed by Ferdinand, brother of the emperor, in right of his wife, Anne Jagellon, only sister of the deceased king. The throne of Hungary, however, being elective, a formidable party of nobles opposed the pretensions of Ferdinand, and elevated John Zapoli, count of Scepus, vaivode of Transylvania, to the vacant dignity. The vaivode, unable to contest the crown of Hungary with the house of Hapsburg, demanded aid from the sultan, and offered to pay tribute to the Porte. Soliman accepted the overture; and entering Hungary at the head of a prodigious army, subdued all Lower Hungary; and pursuing his conquests along the banks of the Danube, laid siege to Vienna.[*] Here the redoubtable arms of the victorious Soliman II. received a check; the valiant defence of the Viennese, and the approach of winter, compelled the Turks to raise the siege, and to retreat, after losing 60,000 men. Furious at this humiliation, the sultan retired, vowing to return the following year at the head of legions, whose invincible prowess should not only subjugate Hungary, but reduce the whole of Germany and the hereditary dominions of the Hapsburg under the rule of the Ottoman sceptre.

The menaces of the sultan were not spoken without a deliberate resolve to perform them; and rumours of the prodigious preparations making for the campaign, excited terror and dismay throughout civilized Europe. The unfortunate Hungarians fled from a country doomed to horrible devastation, and implored aid from the princes of Europe. The hostile Leagues of Augsbourg and Smalkalden suspended their mutual animosity; even the most virulent zealot of either party felt that in the face of peril so imminent, unity, and the temporary oblivion of religious feuds could alone save Germany.

At this period of general excitement, the rumour became prevalent relative to the secret support and encouragement given by Francis I. to the designs of Soliman. The deep and unappeasable resentment which Francis bore the emperor was well known: in Europe there existed no sure ally for the king of France, of sufficient power to enable him to restrain and balance the overwhelming influence of the House of Austria; Charles, by his diplomacy, or through family alliances, dominated in most courts. The habit which, it was known, the king had acquired chiefly from perusing the writings of the sectarians, and from association with them, of judging religious and political questions without reference to the ancient and prescriptive code of Rome, added great weight to the accusations and unsparing censures of the emperor and his brother on the conduct of Francis. The king bore the obloquy heaped upon him with infinite composure; he never directly denied the imputations of his dealings with the Porte, though many of his political acts seemed to repudiate the charge. There is little doubt, however, that Francis, at this period, had commenced those negotiations with the sultan Soliman II., which ten years later ripened into open alliance; but, at first, even the fearless and liberal spirit of the king of France shrank from avowing an ally, whose co-operation would virtually have placed him outside the pale of European politics.

Early in the spring of the year 1532, the emperor's suspicion of the disloyal practices of Francis with the sultan received unexpected confirmation by the arrival in Paris of a solemn embassy from Zapoli, vaivode of Transylvania, the ally of Soliman, who demanded from the king succours to prosecute his claims against the House of Hapsburg, and the hand of a French princess in marriage. Francis, although he was aware that the reception which he bestowed upon this embassy was watched with jealous and intense interest by the potentates of Europe, gave the Hungarian envoy, Jean de Lasco, a friendly welcome. He promised to aid the vaivode with a sum of 100,000 crowns on two conditions:—first, that the money should not be employed against the king of the Romans, as Ferdinand was included in the treaty of Cambray, but used only to repair the ravages committed by the Turks; and secondly, that Zapoli should renounce the alliance of the sultan. If these conditions were accepted by the vaivode, the king promised to bestow upon him in marriage the hand of the princess Isabel, sister of the king of Navarre.* Francis despatched his secretary, Maçaut, to deliver the money to Zapoli; but the vaivode, aware that the alliance of the Turks alone enabled him to maintain his position in Hungary, declined the offers of the king, and, with commendable integrity, refused to take the money, which Maçaut conveyed back into France.

The emperor did not fail to perceive in this incident a positive proof of the league of Francis with the enemies of Christendom. Germany echoed again with his reproachful denunciations; and the emperor, in his harangue at the diet of Ratisbon, directly accused Francis of inciting the Infidels to invade Hungary. In order to expose the bad faith of the king, Charles commanded his ambassador Ballançon to make a formal demand, in his name, to the king of France, to aid him in expelling the invaders from his hereditary and elective kingdoms, by lending him money, and by placing the French army and fleets at his disposal. Exasperated at the injurious language Charles had employed concerning him, Francis saw fresh cause of offence in this abrupt demand. If the emperor believed in the truth of the hardy assertions which he had made, this request amounted to an insolent defiance to the king to disprove his words; while if Charles knew that for party purposes he had been dishonourably traducing his rival, it was not to the king of France to whom application ought to be made for aid in repelling the invasion. Francis therefore indignantly replied: "I have no money to give to the emperor; besides, I am not a banker to aid my allies with loans. I do not lend my army, but I lead it myself to combat. My fleet would be useless for the defence of Hungary; and it is necessary to me to defend my provinces of Languedoc and Provence from the assaults of pirates who infest the Mediterranean. Nevertheless, if the emperor fears lest the Infidels should attack both Italy and Hungary, let us divide the operations necessary for the safety of Europe. Let the emperor undertake the defence of Hungary, and I, in conjunction with my good friend and perpetual ally, the king of England, will march at the head of fifty thousand men for the protection of Italy."* The irony of this response greatly incensed the emperor; and, with many wrathful comments, he communicated it to the Diet.

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* Du Bellay.

The whole course of the policy pursued by Francis leads to the inevitable conclusion, that though he did not perhaps actually incite the Turks to invade the dominions of the emperor, yet he was far from being inimical to their success. Already Francis maintained a resident envoy at the Porte; and Frenchmen enjoyed immunities and privileges at Constantinople above the subjects of other Christian states. The secret agents of the emperor warned him repeatedly that the closest understanding existed between the king of France and the sultan. A successful invasion of Germany by Soliman must necessarily concentrate the forces of the emperor to resist the progress of the Turkish banners. Italy would be defenceless; and in her terror at the ravages committed by the sultan's terrible janissaries, would throw herself for protection at the feet of France. The probable designs of the king, and the revolution in European politics which this alliance of the Turk with a Christian power might occasion, filled the emperor with disquietude. Various projects of usurpation were ascribed to Francis and his new allies. To the empress Isabel, his beloved consort, Charles develops his anxieties at this period. "My very dear and beloved wife," wrote the emperor to Dona Isabel,* "after having kissed this paper with the same tenderness and ardour as I should kiss your lips were I by your side, I write to inform you that the private information I have received respecting the movements of the Turks differs from the advices before sent to me. I had been assured that Soliman had no other design in raising so powerful an army than to send it, towards the end of the spring, to the coasts of the Red Sea. Now, I have received quite a different account from Venice, on the authority of the ambassador which that republic accredits to the court of the Turk at Constantinople. The ambassador has just made his report to the senate; when, after hearing his statement, that assembly commanded a secretary to communicate to my ambassador those particulars which concern me. It appears from this statement that the rumour was false relative to the design of the Turks to send their army to the shores of the Red Sea, and that the Grand Seigneur caused the report to be propagated only the more effectually to deceive and surprise Christendom; for his design is to march against us about the end of the spring; and for this he is now engaged in preparing a large fleet, in order to embark an army, composed of his choicest troops. It was furthermore reported at Constantinople that this fleet is to be composed of more than three hundred vessels, galleys, transports, and galeasses—vessels fit to convey numerous bodies of cavalry. Under the command of Ibrahim Bassa, this great fleet and army will sail and attack our kingdoms of Naples and Sicily. The statement of the ambassador goes even further still. He asserts that it is certainly believed that the king of France is to support this enterprise; the success of which is deemed the more certain, inasmuch that Soliman, with his janissaries and the entire forces of his empire, is to make a simultaneous descent upon Hungary." To this letter the empress sent the most tender reply. The attachment subsisting between Charles and his consort was ardent and absorbing; and amongst his numerous counsellors he found not one more intelligent and devoted than

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* Du Bellay.

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* Capefigue,—Hist. de François I. The emperor's letter is dated Brussels, January 27, 1532.

Isabel. "My very dear and honoured lord and husband, after kissing your letter a thousand times, your Isabel, who bears you the most fervent affection, thanks you for the last sentiment expressed in your letter, by which you deign to assure her that you have maintained pure and entire, that faith which you gave her, and which is so infinitely precious to her. But who, my most revered and loved emperor, could be guilty of such incredulity as to have doubted this fact? You, who so religiously observe your plighted word when given to strangers, how could you violate your conjugal vows, or fail in ever so little in that you have promised to one who so greatly esteems your affection, who adores you, and who has the felicity to meet with reciprocal love from you?"* The empress then proceeds to discuss the political questions agitating Europe. She consoles Charles for his numerous anxieties, and exhorts him to persevere in his noble and pious design of restoring peace and unity to Christendom. After concluding her letter, Isabel appends to it a postscript, conveying information which had just reached her, relative to the designs of Francis, and which, when perused, must have provoked eager discussion in the Imperial cabinet at Brussels. "Most invincible emperor, my lord and husband, whilst the accompanying despatch was preparing for your majesty, I have received a letter from cardinal Colonna, your lieutenant in Naples, wherein he sends me advice that he has discovered the secret of the treaty just concluded between the Turks and the king of France, to attack with their joint forces the kingdom of Naples. He adds, that he learns from private intelligence of undoubted authenticity, that while the Turk, with one hundred and twenty vessels of war, makes a descent upon Naples, it is the intention of king Francis to sail to the coasts of Spain with a squadron of forty galleys, to do all the injury and destruction which the strength of his armament permits, or that his unjust resentment suggests."

Notwithstanding the assertion of the cardinal Colonna that he had discovered the substance of the treaty existing between the king of France and Soliman II., the terms of the alliance, offensive and defensive, concluded between the king of England and Francis during their interviews at Calais and Boulogne in the month of October, 1532, might have dissipated suspicion. The two monarchs engaged to assemble between them an army of 80,000 men, with a suitable train of artillery, "for the defence and preservation of our most holy religion, in order to resist the damnable machinations and enterprises of the Turk, the ancient adversary of our common faith!"* The cardinal Dosère, moreover, presuming to accuse the king of his league with the Infidels in full consistory, the French ambassador rose and vehemently replied, "*Que le cardinal avait menti par la gorge.*" The emperor Charles V., however, was not to be diverted from his opinion that the relation of the French court with the Ottoman government was of a more intimate nature than Francis chose to avow; and with politic forethought he resolved to prepare himself for the issue. Aware that even the well-disciplined forces of Spain and the empire could not repel the aggressions of the Infidels in Hungary, and the hostile operations of the Protestant princes in the north of Germany, and at the same time defend Italy against the menaced invasion of Francis at the head of 50,000 men, the emperor concluded an armistice with the Protestant league, by granting to the Lutherans the free exercise of their faith, until the assembly of the general council. This was one of the most politic acts achieved by the emperor; Charles never pushed matters to extremity, but always dexterously contrived to appear to be conferring signal favours where he in fact conceded most. This prudence enhanced the lustre of his reign, as much as the inconsiderate rashness of Francis I. diminished the influence of France in the counsels of Europe.

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* Capefigue,—Hist. de François I. Isabel dates her letter—Alcala, March 3, 1532.

As some slight compensation for the innumerable vexations which assailed Francis during the absence of the queen of Navarre, the permanent annexation of the duchy of Bretagne to the crown was effected by the ingenuity of that incomparable master of litigation, the cardinal Duprat. The young dauphin was solemnly crowned at Rennes, and proclaimed duke of Bretagne,† though the revenues and administration of the duchy were still to belong to Francis during his life, in accordance with the will of queen Claude, duchess de Bretagne. The salique laws were solemnly accepted by the assembled states, who declared the duchy to be irrevocably united with the crown of France. An edict was afterwards issued by the king, forbidding the descendants of the ancient dukes, in the female line, to assume the surname of Bretagne, or to bear the arms of the duchy. This project had been a favourite one with Louise de Savoie; and frequently she discussed its feasibility with Duprat; but the jealousy with which the Bretons clung to the hope of being again governed by an independent duke of their own ancient race of princes, rendered it impossible for Madame to accomplish her desire during the turbulent days of her regency.

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* Traité entre François I. et Henri VIII., signed at Calais, October 28, 1532.

† Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

Marguerite journeyed from Pau to spend the winter of the year 1532 with her brother. She had been absent from him nearly a year, during which period the king displayed the greatest impatience at their separation. The malignant accusations of the Sorbonne, which, emboldened by the success of its past measures, ventured now to aim its censures on Marguerite herself, may perhaps have been an additional incentive to the queen to visit Paris. "What triumph for the theologians of Paris to achieve the humiliation of the queen of Navarre, their resolute and persevering opponent," argued Noël Béda; "to silence the heretic queen, and to compel her to withdraw her countenance from the Lutheran teachers; or to exact from her a public and distinct avowal of her allegiance to Rome, would elevate the renown of the Faculty above all dread of detraction, and loss of consideration." It was exultingly remarked that all the learned men patronized by the queen of Navarre were either confirmed upholders of the Lutheran heresy, or else suspected of secret adherence to the proscribed tenets. The learned Jean de Montluc, so celebrated for his eloquence and diplomatic ability, whom the queen of Navarre introduced at the court of France, and who, through her favour, had been intrusted with several important missions, presumed to avow Calvinistic tenets, in defiance of the vows which bound him to the famed order of St. Dominic; for Marguerite, authorized by her brother, took Montluc from his monastery, and without troubling herself to obtain the sanction of his ecclesiastical superiors, had appropriated to the service of the state, and to the defence of the heretic Calvin, those unrivalled talents that ought to have been solely exercised for the exaltation of his order. The theologians, moreover, had to reproach Marguerite for the protection which she afforded in her university of Bourges to the celebrated professor of Greek literature, Melchior Volmar, from whom it was supposed that Calvin imbibed the first taint of heresy; the queen of Navarre, therefore, according to the Faculty, was responsible for the schism, both Lutheran and Calvinistic, which divided the Gallican churches. The attack they meditated on the queen could not, however, be conducted with the celerity in sentence and execution with which a minor delinquent was consigned to the stake. The king must be gradually accustomed to hear the opinions of his sister assailed; and to know that her proceedings were the subject of frequent comment in his universities.

The first time that the university openly assailed the orthodoxy of the queen of Navarre, was probably soon after her arrival in Paris, during the winter of 1532. The king was then absent in Bretagne, whither he had journeyed to be present at the ceremonies attending the recognition of the dauphin as duke of that province. At this juncture the conduct of Marguerite was made the subject of a violent harangue delivered in one of the churches of Paris by a doctor of the Sorbonne. Marguerite's insolent asperser presumed to assure his astonished audience that her conduct had completely alienated the attachment and reverence of the marshal de Montmorency—leaving his auditors to draw the inference he desired to impress, of the consequent decrease of the queen's influence at court, from the displeasure of so mighty a personage. The conduct of the marshal at this period is involved in much mystery; and it is difficult to decide whether, jealous of Marguerite's power over her royal brother, and in reality deeply disapproving of her Lutheran tendencies, he had secretly countenanced this persecution, as his subsequent conduct would seem to denote; or whether, as the queen herself believed, his name was unscrupulously used by the audacious theologian. Marguerite, with great spirit, immediately addressed a letter of dignified remonstrance to the rector of the university, Nicholas Cop, the son of the celebrated physician. Upon their bold assertion of her quarrel with the marshal, Marguerite, in the letter which she also wrote to Montmorency, says that she told the Faculty, "that they were little aware of the friendship which she bore him, and of her perfect confidence in Montmorency's sincerity; so that, mon nepveu," continues the queen, "this Jacobin has been disowned by the whole Faculty of theology, which professes to consider that he has behaved in this affair like a madman."* The rector of the university hastened to appease Marguerite for the affront which she had received, by disavowing his agent. The theologians knew that their efforts to undermine her influence at court must be gradual and cautious; and it was already something achieved for one of their body to have dared to attack the queen of Navarre in public, without ejectment from the pulpit, and a summary transfer to the nearest state prison. It does not appear that Montmorency addressed any complaint to the Sorbonne for the unwarrantable use of his name in this gratuitous attack on his patroness, if indeed he could thoroughly exculpate himself from the imputation. He is, however, at infinite pains to clear himself in Marguerite's opinion. The queen, noble and generous-minded herself, refused to believe the possibility of such treachery, and warmly assures the marshal that she holds him to have been as grossly traduced by the Faculty as herself. "I entreat you to believe, mon nepveu, that all the words that they may choose to ascribe to you, will serve only as a blast to a forge, which kindles again the fire with double fervour of heat when it is thought to be extinct,"† said Marguerite, in the figurative style of her early epistles.

The next act of hostility committed by the Sorbonne occurred during the spring of the year 1533. It was resolved upon at the suggestion of the famous syndic Noël Béda, whose hatred of queen Marguerite and her royal brother often betrayed him into deeds of outrageous violence. Béda had not forgotten the ignominy of his arrest, by the special direction of Francis, for the virulence of his attacks upon Erasmus; nor the sarcasm of the words used respecting his writings by the king, when under his own hand Francis commanded the Faculty of theology to examine and report on the orthodoxy of the grounds of the syndic's condemnation of Lefèvre and Erasmus. Latterly, also, when the question of the divorce between Henry VIII. and his consort, queen Catherine of Arragon, was submitted to the Sorbonne, Béda presumed to conduct himself in a manner most offensive to Francis, and humiliating to the university. As it was a part of the policy of the king to oblige Henry VIII. in most matters, Francis contrived that the decision of his theologians should be pronounced in favour of the divorce. Béda thereupon not only publicly maintained the contrary, but accusing the Faculty of yielding to corrupt influences, he entered a furious protest against the decision on the registers of the university. In an assembly, summoned in accordance with a royal mandate, to deliver to the bishop of Senlis a *resumé* of the deliberations, with the act containing the decision of the Sorbonne, authenticated by the signatures of the chief theologians, the violence displayed by Béda, and the treasonable nature of his harangue filled his auditors with consternation. He commanded the bishop forthwith to restore the act, which he declared "degrading and impious," and upon the refusal of the prelate, the syndic threatened to strike the bishop's name from off the roll of the Faculty. The ravings of this factious demagogue at length became so startling, that the assembly broke up in confusion, the members literally taking to their heels, and leaving Béda in triumphant possession of the tribune.*

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* MSS. de Béth., No. 8514.

† Ibid, No. 8551. Bibl. du Roi.

The bishop of Senlis did not fail to report these disgraceful proceedings to the king; who was with difficulty dissuaded from ordering the deposition of the audacious syndic, on account of the exultation it would afford to the Calvinistic party in the kingdom. Nevertheless, with matchless daring, Béda organized the scheme by which the university sought to render the sister of the king amenable to the penalties of heresy. The proceedings in this matter evinced a much higher amount of caution; the theologians wished to affix the stigma of heresy on Marguerite's writings in silence, and comparative mystery. This achieved, the difficulties they hoped would not afterwards prove insurmountable, to subject her deeds to the tribunal of the Sorbonne.

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* Hist. du Grand Divorce, t. 2.

The poem written by the queen of Navarre, "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse," excited in a supreme degree the displeasure of every zealous Roman Catholic throughout the realm. In these meditations, queen Marguerite, though she scrupulously avoids controversy, makes mention neither of the mediation of saints, justification by works, of purgatory, nor of any of the prominent doctrines of the Romish creed. It was therefore for what she had omitted, rather than for what actually appeared on her pages, that the unpopularity of the queen's poem arose. Much of this poem was written by Marguerite during the days of her correspondence with the bishop of Meaux; and its style is mystical and figurative, in the fashion of Briçonnet's own letters. The writers of the mystic school fell easy victims to the intolerance of their Romish opponents; the vague ideality of their theories rendered it no difficult task to give an heretical construction to passages where the author was innocent of such intent. The only overt act of dissent from the Romish formularies of which the queen had been guilty, was, that she had translated the prayer, "Salve Regina," into French verse, and applied it to Christ, instead of to the Virgin Mary. It was usual for the university to appoint commissioners to make an annual inspection of the new books admitted into the college library; as authors were bound to send a copy of their productions to the Sorbonne. In 1533, Béda was appointed, with several theologians of less note, to make this survey. Marguerite's poem came thus under the inspection of the commissioners: after bestowing upon it a slight examination, they ordered the book to be placed on the list of prohibited works, feigning to be ignorant of its author. The following day, in accordance with the report of the commissioners, the Sorbonne published a censure on the books indicated, forbidding their perusal to the faithful; the decree was then publicly placarded, and appended to a list of the works condemned as heretical, and amongst which figured Marguerite's "Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse."* It does not appear that the rector of the university, Cop, bore any share in this design to implicate the queen of Navarre: he was favourably inclined towards reform, and was himself often subject to the unsparing attack of his unruly subordinate, Noël Béda.

In breathless suspense, the theologians awaited the result of their measures. By pretending ignorance of the author of the poem, they had insidiously afforded Marguerite a chance of escape if she chose to accept it; but in that case they knew she would for the future be at their mercy, and in consequence compelled to withdraw her patronage from reform. Francis, at this period, was sojourning at his palace of the Louvre. When informed of the proceedings of the Faculty, his indignant displeasure knew no bounds. That a body of theologians, whose insolence he had so often chastised, should presume to assail his cherished sister Marguerite—a personage whom he had repeatedly in public declared to be his second self, and moreover to accuse her of heresy, seemed to the king a misdemeanour little short of absolute treason. None dare resist Francis when animated by one of his uncontrollable gusts of passion. The rector of the university, Nicholas Cop, was required to present himself, without delay, before the king; who sternly demanded the names of the theologians upon whose representations his sister's poem had been condemned. Cop replied, and perhaps truly, that he was ignorant of the parties concerned, and therefore could not satisfy the king; for probably the whole transaction had been concealed from him, as his bias towards Calvinism was well known. Francis then commanded the rector to return to the college, and assemble without delay the heads of its four learned departments. He was then directed to institute a searching investigation into the affair, and to present himself before the privy council on the following day, to report the names of the parties upon whose suit the book written by the queen of Navarre had been condemned.

The bishop of Senlis, confessor to the king, was next summoned into the royal presence: Francis directed him to undertake the defence of his sister's poem before the assembled university, and to prove its orthodoxy. He was likewise commissioned to intimate to the Sorbonne, that it was the king's will that an immediate revocation of their censure on "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse," should be promulgated. The bishop of Senlis was Marguerite's staunch friend; and he undertook her defence with enthusiasm. His eloquent address, and his representation of the folly of the proceeding, in condemning a book because certain tenets were not discussed in its pages, made a deep impression upon the assembly. Even the turbulent Béda was silenced, though, perhaps, rather by his apprehensions of what his imprudence might cost him, than by the good bishop's expostulations. When Marguerite's willing champion concluded his harangue, by declaring, with unscrupulous boldness, that neither by her pen, nor by her deeds, had the queen of Navarre offended against the ancient doctrine and discipline of the Romish Church, not one dissentient voice in the assembly rose to contradict the assertion. Cop, remembering the stringent commands of the king, then commenced an inquiry to discover the person who had first denounced the poem as heretical to the commissioners. Aware that their syndic deserved no greater consideration from the king than he was likely to obtain, should it be proved to Francis that his turbulent spirit had provoked this uproar, the theologians, determined to shield Béda, persuaded the curé of St. André-des-Arts, one of the professors of theology who had been appointed on the commission with the syndic, to undertake the responsibility of the act. The censure on "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse" was then unanimously disavowed as a sentence having been pronounced without due circumspection; and the rector of the university was commissioned to bear to the king the recantation of the theologians, and to explain to his majesty that the book had been inadvertently included in the list of prohibited works by the curé of St. André, who was ignorant of its author; not, however, for its heretical tendencies, but because it was published without the approbation of the Faculty of Theology—a form enjoined by edict of the Parliament, as requisite to be obtained before the publication of any work.*

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* Bèze. Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique.

Satisfied with having humiliated the factious Sorbonne, and compelled the theologians to retract their censures, Francis professed himself appeased; and, perhaps, sheltered by the ingenious subterfuge of his colleagues, Béda would have escaped without experiencing the weight of the royal resentment his conduct had provoked, but for another affair, which, unfortunately for him, happened within a very few days after Cop's final interview with the king on the matter of queen Marguerite's poem. This third attack upon the orthodoxy of Marguerite came from the College de Navarre, a learned body which boasted of a Faculty of Theology as famous for erudition, though less celebrated for combativeness than that of the Sorbonne.

In order to show their indignation at the treatment the Sorbonne had received, and imagining that their college, from its appellation, was implicated in the heresy of the queen of Navarre, these furious zealots devised the most insolent affront to demonstrate their hatred of Marguerite. They composed an allegorical play or "moralité" in verse: in the first scene of the performance, a woman, meant to represent the queen of Navarre, was introduced, sitting with a spinning-wheel before her, in the act of dropping her spindle, in order to take a copy of the Holy Gospels translated into the French language, which a hideous demon was presenting to her. After much controversial dialogue between the personages of the drama, abounding in insolent allusions to the sectarians and their patroness, the farce terminated by the transformation of the queen herself into a diabolical spirit, and her departure for the infernal regions.† This indecent piece of buffoonery was publicly performed in the hall of the College of Navarre by four professors of theology, and some of the scholars of the college, in the presence of the principal. The fame of this notable achievement spread far and wide, creating the greatest excitement and indignation. The partisans of the queen of Navarre insisted that signal redress should be made her for the flagrant insult;

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I. Bèze,—Hist. des Egl. Ref. de France.

† Bayle,—Dict. Historique. Calvin,—Ep.

and they constituted by far the largest and most influential portion of the community. The king himself, however, needed no incitement to avenge his sister, and to vindicate the majesty of the throne, violated by this audacious act of the theologians. Even Duprat himself counselled Francis to make a signal example of these turbulent churchmen. Accordingly, in obedience to a warrant sent by the council, the provost Delabarre, attended by the archers of his guard, proceeded to the College of Navarre, to arrest all concerned in the representation of the piece, as well as its author. A rumour of the king's designs had reached the college authorities, and when the officers of justice entered the hall, they were received with shouts of defiance by the scholars and professors, headed by the principal, arrayed in his academical robes. Stones were hurled; the scholars converted their desks and forms into weapons, and fought for their liberty with desperate determination.

At length this disgraceful tumult was terminated by the arrival of a fresh detachment of guards and archers; the students were then disarmed, and compelled to submit. A rigid investigation of the whole affair afterwards commenced in the presence of the provost and his archers; the actors of the farce were compelled to repeat their parts, though the name of the author of the piece could not be discovered. The principal, the four professors of theology, and those scholars who had taken a share in the public representation of the piece, were then declared under arrest, and were immediately marched off by the officers of the provost, and consigned to dungeons in the prison of the Conciergerie. The anger of the king was intense when these proceedings were recounted to him; and he vowed to punish these insolent rebels and aspersers of Marguerite's fame with the full rigour of the laws.

This vexatious affair, however, occasioned Marguerite the utmost disquietude of mind. She perceived the extreme exasperation of the king, and she dreaded lest the punishment assigned to the delinquents might partake of the severity she had seen awarded even to minor offences. Marguerite therefore hastened to her royal brother, and earnestly besought him to pardon her assailants, and to be content, as she was, with the reparation obtained by their arrest. It required all Marguerite's influence with the king to prevail upon him to stay the arraignment and trial of the culprits; and it is recorded that she even knelt at his feet to obtain her petition. The king saw himself assailed on a tender point, and he found oblivion difficult; both his affection for Marguerite and his jealousy of the majesty and prerogatives of the throne had been roughly violated. The queen, nevertheless, persevered in her intercession; for, with noble forbearance, Marguerite rightly believed that she was avenging herself more signally by obtaining the pardon of her unscrupulous opponents, than if she had suffered them to be consigned to the galleys for life.*

The theologians of the College of Navarre, therefore, after being detained in prison for several weeks, were dismissed with a suitable admonition: "But, certes, if such had been Marguerite's pleasure, nothing was easier for her than to have effectually put to the rout such a pack of foolhardy knaves," observes a contemporary historian, who greatly revered the queen.† Whether Francis obtained private information that Noël Béda was the author of the drama, or that the king availed himself of this opportunity to repay the syndic for many of his ancient, though not forgotten, misdemeanours, Béda fared worse in this affair than the theologians of the rival Faculty. He received a royal mandate exiling him from the realm of France for the space of two years, to the utter dismay of his colleagues at the Sorbonne, who found invaluable resource in their syndic's talent for controversy, and in the fierce invectives of his pen. Perhaps, as Béda took his unwilling departure from the venerable walls of the Sorbonne, the reflection was consolatory, that Francis did him the credit of believing that all the theological brawls of the capital were fomented by his unrivalled malevolence. "There is a good three thousand monks in Béda's single person," was the remark of the learned Erasmus. The marshal de Montmorency apparently rendered no assistance to his patroness, queen Marguerite, in repelling the odium which the universities sought to affix on her name. His conduct altogether, towards Marguerite, is inexplicable at this period of her life. Her friendship was yet needful to him; for there remained higher offices to be obtained in the state, and the admiral de Brion, a man of courtier-like deportment and subtle address, was there ready to avail himself of any oversight committed by the marshal. Montmorency's jealousy of Marguerite's influence with her brother, though it raised him to the pinnacle of royal favour, his secret anger at the queen's defection from the ancient faith of her forefathers, and the notorious misunderstanding existing between himself and the king of Navarre, combined to render the marshal well content that she should lose some portion of her influence and renown.

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* Bayle. † Ste. Marthe,—Oraison Funébre.

During the year 1533 the attacks of the Romish party to ruin the queen of Navarre in her brother's favour were perpetual. If Marguerite would have condescended to one conciliatory overture; or if she had voluntarily tendered a single proof of her continued allegiance to the Church, her most bitter enemies might have been appeased. The monks, so cruelly ridiculed by the queen in her literary compositions, returned Marguerite's irony with virulent abuse. They satirized her writings and misrepresented her actions, while they cowered beneath her scrutiny, and trembled lest the power, which none of them denied that she possessed, should be exercised to procure the public exposure of their depravity. In a turbulent assembly held at Issoudun, to devise measures for the effectual suppression of heresy, one fanatic monk, superior of the Franciscan monastery of that town, had the hardihood to propose publicly, that the queen of Navarre, the patroness of the sectarians, should be seized and tied up in a sack, and drowned in the Seine. This treasonable harangue no sooner reached the ears of Francis, than he despatched a warrant addressed to the authorities of Issoudun, commanding that the factious monk should himself suffer the same penalty as he had adjudged Marguerite worthy of enduring. It was with the greatest difficulty, and after the repression of a popular tumult, that the mayor of Issoudun succeeded in arresting this daring Franciscan; for the monks of his monastery stirred up an insurrection throughout the district. The officer, Denis du Jon, who at last executed the royal warrant for his arrest, fell a victim, a few days afterwards, to the revenge of the monks; he was assassinated under circumstances of the greatest cruelty, and his body was dragged through the streets of Issoudun by the infuriated populace. The superior of the Franciscans, meanwhile, the guilty cause of the insurrection, remained in prison awaiting his doom; but again Marguerite's benevolent spirit induced her, most injudiciously in this instance, to intercede in his behalf; and after much solicitation she obtained his life. The outrage upon his sister, however, had been accompanied by too flagrant a violation of the laws for Francis to suffer the turbulent ecclesiastic to escape without condign punishment. The Prior was therefore solemnly degraded from his ecclesiastical dignities, and sent to the galleys for the space of two years, a sentence highly applauded by all peaceable and well-disposed persons.*

Unprincipled charlatans, like the prior of Issoudun, thus filled Paris with restless and noisy declamation; but their violence, instead of advancing, hurt the cause of the Church. The signal failure of their efforts to injure the queen of Navarre, meanwhile, was followed by a secession from the Romish party, which filled the universities with consternation. The upright and generous spirit of Nicholas Cop, rector of the Sorbonne, revolted at the hypocrisy he witnessed, and he longed to free himself from the trammels imposed by his position. Cop was the friend of Calvin, who was at this time residing in Paris, at the college of Fortet. On All Saints' Day, 1533, Cop preached a sermon before the university, in the chapel of the Mathurin convent, composed by Calvin.† Two Franciscan monks amongst the congregation denounced the sermon as heretical to the parliament, which thereupon summoned the rector to appear and defend himself against the accusation. Cop fortunately received timely warning from a friend, of this intended citation, which was merely preliminary to arrest, and instead of awaiting the summons, he fled to Bâle.‡ The lieutenant of police, Morin, then received instructions from the parliament to proceed against Calvin as the author of the heretical sermon. But, following the prudent example of his friend Cop, Calvin had quitted Paris, wisely withdrawing himself from the vengeance of the exasperated theologians; though, less fortunate than the rector, he had only time to reach Angoulême. There he was, of course, compelled to remain concealed in the house of a friend, as his arrest, if he attempted to continue his route into Switzerland, seemed certain. The friends of Calvin, when they heard of his perilous position, immediately applied to the queen of Navarre, and fervently petitioned her to procure the annulling of the order of arrest which had been issued. The goodness of Marguerite's heart and the fearless courage of her character were rightly appreciated, when it was believed that she would interest herself to rescue from the fury of the Sorbonne another "sectarian," after the vexatious annoyances to which she had recently been subject. Calvin, at this period, was comparatively little known in the theological world; and no writings of his had incurred the censure of the schools. The boldness of his opinions, however, and the majestic dignity of his language, distinguished him already; and he was looked upon as one of the most rising of the reformed teachers. Calvin was favourably known to Marguerite for his learning; his classical and theological education had been completed at her university at Bourges, under the famous professors, Alciat and Wolmer; and the queen especially patronized the students educated by the learned men she appointed to professorships in her college. Marguerite therefore obtained, though not without difficulty, the pardon of Calvin from the king; and, to the consternation of the Sorbonnists it was signified to them that the pursuit of the heretic, to whose doctrine the perversion of their rector was ascribed, must forthwith cease.* The good offices of the queen, moreover, procured Calvin permission to reside at Angoulême; where he remained until the outcry raised on the conversion of Du Tillet, one of the canons of the cathedral, compelled him to seek another abode. This latter circumstance especially introduced Calvin to Marguerite's notice; and from henceforth she appears to have maintained a frequent correspondence with him, and to have been consulted by the illustrious reformer on most of his projects. Marguerite's influence over the king in both these affairs was the more apparent, for while Francis, at the suit of his sister, granted immunity to John Calvin, the individual who was accused by the Faculty of having by his subtle persuasions induced their rector to cast off his allegiance to Rome, the king wrote a letter to the parliament, by the urgent counsel of Duprat, commanding that measures should be taken to discover the person who had warned Cop of his danger, that such might be rigorously punished as an abettor of heresy.* It was probably the glaring inconsistency of the king's conduct in this and in many similar instances, which encouraged the reformers to persevere in their endeavours to overthrow the Church of Rome, in defiance of the edicts issued against them. No one believed that the king was a bigot at heart, or indeed that he cared much about religion at all, except as far as it was subservient to politics. They ever beheld the influence of the queen of Navarre interpose to modify the rigour of the measures proposed by the intolerant cardinal chancellor; and they knew besides, that neither Duprat nor Montmorency possessed authority to molest one of the men, however malignant his heresy, whom it had been Marguerite's pleasure to admit within the principality of Béarn. Francis always acted from violent and sudden impulses. When the progress of reform in France appeared to militate against his political interests, the king suppressed it with fire and faggot; though, as he persecuted not from principle, and as to please his sister Francis was willing to sacrifice many diplomatic advantages, Marguerite's intercessions were generally successful throughout every stage of the king's zeal.

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* Notice sur Marguerite d'Angoulême, par Eusèbe Castaigne.
† Beza,—Hist. des Eglises Reformées de France.
‡ Ibid.

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

Various political affairs occupied the mind of the king during the autumn of this year. The invasion of the Turks had been repulsed by the emperor in person at the head of a vast army of 90,000 infantry, and 30,000 cavalry. The army of Soliman was composed of 300,000 horsemen, with innumerable battalions of infantry. Such an assemblage had never been gathered on the soil of

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* Registres du Parlement.

Europe since the palmy days of the crusades; and the causes conducing to the failure of those monstrous expeditions, told with fatal effect on the savage hordes of the sultan. Winter nearly set in before this enormous multitude had encamped on the plains of Hungary; famine speedily thinned the Turkish ranks; a deserted and ruined country lay behind; and on the frontiers of Hungary the army of the emperor Charles V., in league with the princes of Germany, awaited them. Soliman, therefore, without attempting a hostile encounter, retreated into the Turkish provinces; while the emperor and his allies prudently offered no hindrance as the Mussulmen defiled again across their own frontiers.* Though the fears of Christendom were relieved, and the crescent and the *fleur-de-lis* had not united, still the remarkable apathy displayed by Francis and his chivalrous subjects during the Turkish invasion, passed not unheeded by the statesmen of Europe. Not a single French cavalier had drawn his sword to repel the Infidel: the heir of St. Louis, and the descendants of Godefroi de Bouillon, of Joinville, of Courtenay, and of numerous other valiant knights and paladins who had shed their blood and lavished their treasures to cross their swords in mortal combat with the unbelievers, now viewed with passive indifference the inroads of the Saracenic hordes into the very heart of the civilized world. France, however, had been humbled, her limits circumscribed, and her military prowess repelled by the sword and by treaty; nevertheless she felt that she could still avenge herself: the cabinet, henceforth, became the chief arena of her combats —and her aim, the overthrow of the ancient diplomatic codes, and the establishment of a new policy which might attest her vigour, and restore to her a chief place in the councils of Europe.

The emperor, on the retreat of Soliman II., returned to Italy, to confer with the pope at Bologna. Neither Francis nor Charles ever voluntarily abandoned Italy. The enchantment of that fair land appeared to cling to both of them, and to inspire them when absent with a restless desire to revisit it. The pacification of Italy might now be said to be accomplished. Sforza had submitted himself to the clemency of the emperor, and received pardon, and the investiture of the Milanese, on condition of paying yearly tribute, and of espousing Charles's niece, Christina, daughter of the deposed king of Denmark. The Italian states, with the exception of Venice and Genoa, had united in league under the Imperial banners for the preservation of national independence. The ostensible cause, therefore, of the interview between Clement VII. and the emperor was to consolidate the alliance of the states, and to induce the two powers, which yet held aloof, to accept the league. Francis despatched the cardinals De Tournon and De Grammont to watch the interests of France during this interview; to protest against the support about to be given to his revolted subjects, the Genoese, by their reception into the league; and to remonstrate with the pope upon the severity of the measures which he had adopted towards the king of England. The more sober age of Francis had convinced him that self-interest and aggrandizement are the most powerful of human incentives. The king therefore, whose ulterior designs on Italy demanded the alliance of the Holy See, authorized his ambassadors to propose a marriage between his second son, Henry, duke of Orleans, and Clement's niece, Catherine, the heiress and sole legitimate representative of the Medici.* A project more gratifying to the ambition of the pope could not have been proposed; and it had the desired effect of subduing Clement's enthusiasm for the Imperial cause—the more so as the pontiff's pride was severely stung when, on his mentioning the proposal to the emperor, Charles very coolly expressed his absolute unbelief that Francis sincerely intended to sully the lilies of Valois by matrimonial alliance with the heiress of the Florentine merchant princes.† This taunt diminished the exultation of Clement, while it increased his anxiety to achieve the alliance. Francis hastened to despatch full powers to his ambassadors, so as not to leave a doubt of his good faith. The tactics of the emperor had been lately notably at fault in divining the aim of the political combinations set on foot by his adroit rival, and in this instance his surprise was unfeigned. Eager to repair the injury his incredulity had inflicted on his interests, Charles did all in his power to prevail upon the pope to decline the king's alliance. He offered to bestow Catherine on Sforza duke of Milan, instead of his own niece; and promised, in case the property which she possessed in France in right of her mother, Madelaine de la Tour, was confiscated, to present her with lands to double the amount in the duchy of Milan.* Clement VII. was not to be diverted by these plausible representations from eagerly accepting the honour tendered by the king of France; and the emperor quitted Italy impressed with the mortifying fact, that if, after fifteen years of warfare, he had at length succeeded in compelling Francis reluctantly to sign the renunciation of his rights upon Italy, this marriage virtually reopened the contest. Though the treaty of Cambray no longer rendered it possible for Francis to contend exclusively for the possession of the Milanese, Catherine de Medici, the future consort of the duke of Orleans, possessed claims on the duchies of Florence, of Urbino, and on several smaller states, to recover any of which would serve as a pretext for the French to invade Italy.

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* Sleidan,—Commentar.

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* Du Bellay.

† Du Bellay. De Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

During these negotiations Marguerite retired again into the dominions of her husband. The court of France, whilst her brother was absent on progresses through his kingdom, no longer possessed the same attractions. The gloomy stateliness of Eleanor suited not the queen's lively *enjouement* of character. Her nieces, the young princesses, resided away from the court with their governesses, the countess de Brissac and Madame de Montréal, so that Marguerite, now that Madame was no more, and the king absent from Paris, began to long for her southern home. Marguerite and her husband established themselves at their castle of Nérac for the autumn of the year 1533. No injury had befallen any of the religious refugees during the queen's absence; and on her arrival from Paris their number was increased by the presence of Calvin at Nérac.

When sojourning in Béarn, Marguerite adopted great simplicity in her habits and attire. Her magnificent vestments, and the indulgence of her taste for the fine arts,

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* Du Bellay. De Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

Marguerite reserved for the court of France. At Fontainebleau she assumed the great princess; at Nérac, the queen appeared as the noble matron, devoted to pious exercises, to severe study, and to works of beneficence. "I remember well," says Brantôme, "that this great queen of Navarre, when I, as a little boy, used to sojourn at her court with my grandmother the sénéchale of Poitou, never used to keep more than three mules of burden, and six mules to draw her two litters. She possessed, also, three or four chariots for her maids of honour and for her suite."* Marguerite dined daily in public, and the hall where she took her repasts was generally crowded by persons eagerly gazing upon her. She had usually two tables spread, which were served with great frugality and economy. At the upper table Marguerite dined alone, served by her officers. The queen's first lady of honour, the sénéchale of Poitou, presided at the second table, at which all strangers honoured by Marguerite's invitation dined. In taking her meals thus in public, Marguerite seems to have adhered to the rigid ceremonial of her brother's court; for there she always maintained two separate tables, although it was only on special occasions that she absented herself from the king's table, where her place was on the left hand of Francis. When the queen wished to show any visitor a special mark of friendly attention, she used to send him a dish of viands from her own table. Brantôme relates a curious anecdote of the queen when bestowing this compliment on the prince of Amalfi, a subject of the emperor's, who having deserted from the Imperial cause, lived consequently in Paris on a pension assigned him by Francis. He says: "Often her majesty of Navarre honoured the prince by sending him something relishing from her table, to eat for the love of her: the said prince being very flattered and proud of these attentions." "These poor stranger princes," the queen used to remark, "who have quitted everything out of loyal service to the king my brother, have not their equipages and services, their train of domestics, and luxuries like the lords of this court. We must oblige them, therefore, in every possible manner; although the table of M. le grand maître never fails them, nevertheless, the courtesies which I bestow upon them are felt the deepest." "Often," continues Brantôme, "the queen would send the prince some gracious message or speech, or inquire his opinion on some matter; to all which he generally replied so pertinently and well as to afford the queen great satisfaction. King Francis loved his sister very dearly, who by such delicate favours and notice gained him many faithful servants."*

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* Brantôme,—Capitaines Illustres. Vie de César Borgia.

During her hours of retirement Marguerite used to employ herself with her correspondence, addressed to the chief personages of her brother's court and to all the most celebrated scholars of Europe. The king of Navarre consulted her on all his plans for the welfare of his people; and often the entire administration remained for months together in her hands, whilst the king, whose health was delicate, amused himself at the baths of Cotterets, or was absent on his military duties in Guyenne. She had also stated hours in the day for her theological studies; during which she conferred with the chief divines, both Romish and reformed, at the court. Some portion of every afternoon she devoted to embroidery with her ladies. Marguerite then frequently recounted some witty story, or recited a poem; or perhaps she edified her hearers by a grave religious exhortation. "Often when this noble princess was alone in her chamber," says Marguerite's ardent panegyrist, Ste. Marthe, "she took up a book instead of a distaff, a pen instead of a spindle, and her tablets instead of a needle. When she employed herself with her tapestry, or in other needlework (which she regarded as a most delectable occupation) she always employed a person to read aloud to her the work of some historian, poet, or notable author; or she dictated some meditation which was immediately taken down in writing. I will recount another habit of hers that may possibly surprise many who hear it, but which is nevertheless most true, and that might be confirmed, was it deemed requisite, by the united testimony of many great and honourable personages, who, with myself, have often witnessed it,—that, while she diligently worked with her needle, she had two secretaries employed around her chair—one in noting down French verse, which she composed very swiftly, and with admirable erudition and facility; the other in writing letters under her dictation to despatch to her numerous friends."

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* Brantôme,—Cap. Illustres. Vie du prince de Melphe.

† Oraison Funèbre de Marguerite, Reine de Navarre.

Marguerite's correspondence with the king must have alone daily monopolized no inconsiderable portion of her leisure; and from allusions of frequent occurrence in her letters, her communication with Eleanor and the other members of the royal family was frequent. The queen attended matins daily; and in the afternoon Lefèvre or Roussel usually preached before the court, Marguerite being invariably present—often with the king, her husband. Henry's zeal for the opinions of the reformers had greatly increased since Marguerite's residence with him in Béarn; indeed the domestic happiness of the illustrious pair flourished more amid the rude mountains of Henry's maternal heritage, than when surrounded by the luxuries and refinements of the court of France. There the imperious claims of Francis I. were found to be almost as irksome by the king of Navarre as by the duke d'Alençon: with this difference, that Henry possessed his consort's affection, while the former was only tolerated by Marguerite because duty forbad her thorough alienation. At the court of St. Germain it was the will of Francis that his sister should depend upon himself alone: he looked upon her as exclusively his own; her time, her confidence, her pursuits were to be shared alone with him. As her king, her brother, and her inseparable companion from infancy, Francis willed that the lustre of his crown should likewise circle his sister's brow; that in themselves might centre the impersonation of the majesty of France. The exactions of the king, and the isolated position in which Francis affected to regard his sister in respect to all except himself, the king of Navarre found very difficult to reconcile with his claims upon Marguerite as her husband; but as long as he sojourned at the court of France Henry knew that interference would be unavailing, and only serve the king as a pretext to request his departure thence on some military or political expedition. The love which Marguerite bore him, and her gentleness, softened though it did not allay Henry's jealous resentment; by far the happier days, therefore, that Henry and Marguerite spent together were passed in the king's hereditary castles of Pau and Nérac. There Henry reigned the undisputed lord; for in Béarn even his fair and learned consort became subject to his authority. Marguerite's frequent voluntary residence in Béarn proves, that notwithstanding her devotion to Francis, her husband's dominion was the reverse of irksome to her; and indeed, while presiding over the little court of Nérac, she reigned, it may be said, more truly as a queen than when sharing the honours and magnificence of St. Germain and Fontainebleau with her chivalrous but arbitrary brother.

The honours which the king of Navarre freely bestowed upon his consort extended to the deference he paid to her opinions. It was to please Marguerite that Henry had opened the portals of his principality to the persecuted reformers: it was next at her solicitation that he listened to their doctrine. Gérard Roussel, at the queen's desire, expounded the Scriptures in the presence of the king of Navarre, who was at length induced to be present at the sermons preached privately in Marguerite's apartments. The king was much impressed by the simplicity of the doctrine expounded by Roussel and Lefèvre; and though he did not accept their opinions with the hearty approval displayed by Marguerite, he was far from prohibiting, or even opposing, the efforts of the reformed party. Two converted monks of the order of the Augustinians, from which Luther himself sprang, named Bertaut and Couraut, had sought the protection of the queen of Navarre, and enjoyed her favour. Couraut, especially, frequently preached before her, as, like Roussel, he seems to have advocated a system of mutual concession between the reformers and the Church of Rome. He deprecated the fatal schism which had riven the Church in sunder; and maintained that if the Romish hierarchy would set about the work of reform in sincerity, it was the bounden duty of true Christian people to submit to the supremacy of the Holy See. This theory was a favourite one with the queen of Navarre; there were also many of the more timid spirits of the age who, terrified at their forcible emancipation from the thrall of the priesthood, used it as a palliative of the deed, and professed to be profoundly convinced that Rome herself would at length take the initiative, and, by guiding the movement, preserve her supremacy unimpaired.

By the permission of the queen of Navarre, the Protestants of Béarn met frequently to celebrate and partake of the holy communion, according to the reformed tenets, in a subterranean chamber beneath the castle of Pau. Afterwards, the place of assembly was changed to a lofty vaulted apartment, situated under the terrace of the castle, and which was one of the secret chambers appertaining to the royal Mint.* These assemblies were conducted with profound secrecy, after nightfall. Marguerite, accompanied by those of her court professing the reformed tenets, frequently attended, and received the sacrament in both kinds; and finally, some time during the winter of the year 1533, the king of Navarre, won by her exhortations, joined also these assemblies.

Several Romish historians of these stirring times deny that the king of Navarre was seduced by the persuasions of his consort to countenance heresy. A story is related by them in support of this assertion, which is not compatible in its details with the gallant deference the king of Navarre always manifested towards her. Henry, as the anecdote records, being one day informed that Marguerite was engaged in her apartments listening to the exhortations and prayers of one of the reformed ministers, entered the queen's chamber abruptly, intending to bestow signal chastisement on the audacious sectarian who thus presumed to lure his consort from her allegiance to the Romish faith. Marguerite, having meantime received timely warning of the wrathful intentions of her royal spouse, had contrived a way for the escape of the minister. Enraged at being thus foiled in his design, Henry approached Marguerite, and, as the story asserts, dealt her a furious box on the ear, exclaiming: "Madame, vous voulez trop savoir!"† It is added that the king of Navarre forthwith despatched a courier to his brother-in-law, to complain of Marguerite's conduct, entreating the king to interdict such proceedings for the future. Marguerite is also made to bear an active share in this domestic brawl; and is said to have written to her brother in bitter indignation at the affront she had received, appealing to him for redress and protection. The only personage made to act consistently in this improbable tale is king Francis, who, as might be expected, warmly embraced his sister's defence, and threatened the king of Navarre with many angry menaces, if it ever happened to him again to forget the respect due to his consort, as much for her illustrious rank as for her virtues. That Henry, the most chivalrous and *spirituel* prince of the court of France, whose gallant deportment rivalled that of Francis, should so forget his knightly courtesy as to strike his consort in the presence of her ladies, is as little probable, even had she not been the sister of his liege the king of France, as that the queen, with her exquisite refinement of character, would have referred such dispute to the arbitration of her brother. Francis needed but a pretext, Henry knew, to insist that his sister should permanently take up her abode with him in France; and certainly had so gross an insult been offered to Marguerite in the presence of the court of Pau, she would no longer have opposed her brother's project. Henry, besides, needed not to use violence; he had but to decree the expulsion of the sectarian teachers from his dominions to be rid of their ministrations altogether; instead of which, it is unanimously agreed by all historians that he sanctioned their meetings in the vaulted chambers of the Mint at Pau. It is explicitly stated, moreover, that the king of Navarre did actually communicate according to the reformed rites, which occasioned great indignation to the prelates of his court, when the fact became known; and more especially to the cardinal de Grammont and the bishop of Rhodez, who, finding as before, that it was useless to expostulate with the sovereigns, finally took the decided measure of quitting Béarn to lay a formal complaint before the privy council, and the parliament of Paris. They declared that this was the only course left to them to preserve the true faith from extinction in the principality of Béarn and the adjoining territories subject to Henry's sway; as the king of

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* Florimond de Rémond,—Hist. de l'Hérésie. Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

† De Coste,—Eloges des Reines et des Dames Illustres. Mathieu,—Hist. de Francois I.

Navarre attended the celebration of mass rarely, and then only in deference to ancient custom.*

Marguerite, meanwhile, occupied herself during the early months of the year 1534, in negotiating the marriage of her sister-in-law, the princess Isabel of Navarre, with René, viscount de Rohan, whose relatives eagerly desired the union. Though of princely birth, and nearly allied to the royal family of France, M. de Rohan possessed little wealth. His disposition, moreover, was so improvident that it greatly diminished the value of the revenues he had to offer. Isabel had been the object of more than one matrimonial overture: her hand was sought by Zapoli, vaivode of Transylvania, afterwards king of Hungary; and also by the king of Portugal; but political motives caused the failure of both these negotiations. Although the proposals made by the viscount de Rohan were inferior to Isabel's pretensions as the adopted daughter of Francis, the princess, who cherished a preference for the viscount, resolved to accept them.

The reasons set forth by queen Marguerite to induce her brother to give his consent to the proposed alliance, are somewhat curious. She begins by stating to the king that as there was nothing in which she herself, or the king of Navarre, could render him active service at that time, they had devised together to see if in any manner they might relieve his mind from responsibility; "and in this matter, monseigneur, we consider it possible—it is by the marriage of the sister of the king of Navarre, to whom you have often done so much honour as to devise a way to place her by alliance in a high and lofty rank, for which both she and ourselves tender you most humble thanks. But, monseigneur, perceiving that you are overwhelmed with affairs, and are daily solicited by importunate persons to bestow her hand upon them, I have despatched this messenger to impart to you the petition, which, under your good pleasure, M. de Rohan and his uncle, the archbishop of Lyons, have preferred. The latter, actuated by his extreme desire to achieve his nephew's marriage, offers great advantages to my sister, hoping thereby to merit your gracious favour, as, monseigneur, I have desired the bearer of this to inform you, and to state the reasons, also, that induce me to entreat you to let us speedily know your pleasure in this affair. My principal reason for supplicating you to send us a favourable decision, is to relieve yourself from the responsibility of providing longer for an orphan princess, whom you have been pleased, since the decease of her father and mother, to treat as your own daughter; and who has already waited your consent to this marriage so long, that she has become so depressed and indisposed, that her health will not support greater fatigues; nor do I think her in a fit condition to render you service at a distance from home. But if it would please you, monseigneur, to consent that she may remain here, you will settle her according to her own desire, and place her in a House which is allied to your own."*

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* Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique, Article—Navarre. De Rémond, —Hist. de l'Hérésie.

From the expressions used by Marguerite, it would almost appear that a warm attachment subsisted between Isabel and the young viscount de Rohan, probably opposed by Francis on account of the extravagant propensities displayed by the viscount, and the insufficiency of his means to support a royal consort. The king, at this period, as Marguerite observed, had many cares: he had two daughters of his own and a niece to find suitable alliances for, besides the daughters of the duke de Vendôme to dispose of in marriage. As the proposed union was evidently sanctioned by Isabel's brother, the king of Navarre, Francis withdrew his opposition to the alliance. The queen of Navarre therefore took a journey into Bretagne, during the summer of the year 1534, to negotiate Isabel's marriage contract with the members of the House of Rohan, and to be present at the nuptial ceremony, which was solemnized during the month of August.

While in Bretagne, Marguerite became the guest of the count de Châteaubriand, the husband of the unfortunate Françoise de Foix, who at the time of the queen's visit was still living, and residing with her husband at his castle, near to the town of Châteaubriand. If the unhappy countess was then subjected to the horrible imprisonment, which many historians declare to have been her fate, Marguerite certainly never would have honoured the pitiless tyrant who inflicted it, with her presence in the abode where his victim was immured. Nor is it more probable that Francis would abandon the fair and frail object of his once passionate attachment to the vengeance of her incensed husband, without throwing round her the shield of his royal protection. That the home of the count and countess de Châteaubriand was unhappy there can be no doubt; but the attachment which M. de Châteaubriand still bore his wife had prevented the countess, by his absolute command, from taking the veil, after her abandonment by Francis. The count, however, seems to have received her again, to be a source of torment to himself, and to render her life a daily curse, even if his treatment amounted not to a rigour demanding interference from the king. Finally, upon strong presumptive evidence, the count is accused of having, in one of his transports of uncontrollable fury, decreed the death of the unfortunate countess, and to have afterwards spent the remainder of his days in remorseful regrets for her loss.*

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* MS. Bibl. du Roi, F. du Suppl. Fran., No 91.

From the house of the count de Châteaubriand, who was nearly related to the viscount de Rohan, the queen of Navarre proceeded to Alençon. Her letters lead to the supposition that on her way thither she had an interview with the king at Rouen; for a great project then occupied Marguerite's attention; one in which the realization of her own views on reform depended, and that, in concert with the duchess d'Estampes, she had successfully inspired into the mind of her brother. Melancthon, the friend and disciple of Martin Luther, was of all the reformers the one whose opinions and theological works suited best the projects of the queen of Navarre. The mild and charitable disposition of Melancthon pervaded his writings; the abusive declamation abounding in the works of Luther against his opponents, and especially against the Holy See, was wisely avoided by his disciple; and the reconciliation of the parties dividing Christendom he strenuously inculcated. Melancthon acknowledged, moreover, that for the good of Christendom, it would be advisable to restore the supremacy of the pope over the reformed churches, when the Church of Rome had purified herself from her many abuses. He recognised the pope as the guardian of the laws, and the avenger of ecclesiastical discipline. All matters of ceremonial, he held, ought to be submitted to the decision of the Holy See; and that the authority of the pope should be accepted on all disputed points involving doctrine, or practice. The superstitious dogmas of the Church of Rome, purgatory, the invocation of the Virgin and the saints, and the doctrine of transubstantiation, were heartily abjured by Melancthon: on these points Marguerite's opinions were no less emphatic. The opinions of this German theologian, she perceived, partook of Briçonnet's ideas on church reform; unity, submission to the See of Rome, with a gradual and steady approximation of the whole body of Christian men, to the purity and simplicity of faith as practised in the primitive ages of Christianity.

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* The strongest existing evidence to prove that the count de Châteaubriand was implicated in procuring the death of his wife, is the fact, that when, some years after her decease, her relatives of the House of Foix commenced an inquiry into the circumstances attending the decease of the countess, the count caused the investigation to be suppressed by the cession of his vast estates to the constable de Montmorency, who obtained an *ordonnance* from the king, forbidding his courts to take cognizance of the affair.

The efforts of Melancthon were now devoted to bring about a reconciliation between Luther and Zuinglius, the great Swiss reformer, and the unity of their respective disciples. When concord had been re-established in the reformed churches, Melancthon proposed, by the medium of a council or otherwise, to heal the schism between the Protestant and Roman Catholic communities; and to present to the gaze of distracted Europe a church, purified, based on Scriptural foundations, and united under one visible earthly head, who, himself, should no longer claim to be God's infallible vicegerent, but in reality to act in all things as became "the servant of the servants of God." Marguerite entered with enthusiasm into this project; and, undeterred by the threatening aspect of the universities, she earnestly solicited the king to offer Melancthon a professor's chair in one of the colleges of Paris, in order that measures of such unspeakable importance might proceed from his capital; and, that from converse with the learned reformer, the furious hostility of the theologians might diminish.* The duchess d'Estampes assailed the king with the same arguments; in union with Marguerite, she represented to Francis the great advantages he would derive in his struggle with the emperor, by conciliating the good-will of the German Protestants; and that, after all, the cost to obtain this benefit would be but the annual stipend of a professor of theology in his universities. Francis promised to take the proposal into serious consideration; for the habitual clamours of the Sorbonne, and the grave disapproval visible on the countenances of the ecclesiastical peers of the privy council when the policy of this overture to the Lutheran party was discussed, assured the king that every obstacle would be thrown in his way. Opposition always had the effect of confirming the king in his designs; therefore, urgently pressed by the representations of his sister, Francis at length authorized the bishop of Senlis to write, and offer Melancthon a professorship in the university of Paris, with an annual pension of 1200 crowns.† The letter was signed by Francis himself: it stated, that the king having been informed by Guillaume du Bellay, Sieur de Langey, his majesty's ambassador to the confederated princes of Germany, that Melancthon was willing to visit Paris in order to confer with the theologians of his kingdom on the causes which had created schism in the Church, the king bade him cordial welcome, whether he visited the capital as a private individual, or in the capacity of envoy from his sovereign, the elector of Saxony. Melancthon replied by thanking the king for his bounty; but he added, that he could not quit the dominions of the elector without that sovereign's permission. Application to obtain the consent of the elector of Saxony was accordingly made by Du Bellay on the positive direction of the king, whose eagerness to procure the presence of Melancthon in his capital, augmented with the unexpected difficulties he encountered. The elector willingly consented to the departure of his favourite professor to contend with the zealots of the Paris universities, exultingly predicting the speedy conversion of the French to the Lutheran creed. All things were thus amicably disposed for the reception of Melancthon in France, when Luther unfortunately requested his friend and disciple to delay his journey for the space of a few weeks, until after the publication of a work he was engaged in writing against the Anabaptists. Melancthon consented; and wrote to explain the circumstances to the king, sending at the same time a preliminary treatise developing his opinions on reform, for Francis to submit to the Sorbonne. Melancthon's essay met with prompt condemnation; for the university, with intolerant zeal, declared that to differ from the Romish code in doctrine or discipline, even in the smallest particular, was sufficient to render a man amenable to the pains of the deadliest heresy.*

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* Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie. Maimbourg,—Hist. du Calvinisme.

† Bayle,—Dictionnaire Hist., Art.—Melancthon.

Amongst the prelates of the Gallican Church, the cardinal de Tournon showed himself especially hostile to the proposed conferences between the Romish party and the reformed churches. He dreaded lest Melancthon, aided by the powerful influence of queen Marguerite and the duchess d'Estampes, should prevail on Francis to repeal the rigorous edicts fulminated by the council against heresy, as already the reformer's exhortations to the king to adopt a more merciful policy towards his non-conforming subjects found support from the bishop of Senlis. The king's sister, his mistress, his confessor, and his first physician Guillaume Cop, the father of the apostate rector of the Sorbonne, all advocated tolerant measures. Francis himself was neither cruel by disposition, nor a bigot in religion; but he was passionate, jealous to a degree of his prerogatives, and always inclined to favour that party which for the moment appeared to oppose itself to the fame or the political prosperity of the emperor. To avert the visit of the wise and conciliating Melancthon, the teacher whose mild persuasiveness won to the cause of reform more disciples than either the fiery zeal of Luther, or the subtle casuistry of Bucer, the Sorbonne and the Romish prelates leagued themselves together. The cardinal de Tournon dreaded the intervention of the queen of Navarre; and the enmity which the Sorbonne bore Marguerite was only restrained by a wholesome dread of the consequences of any attempted defamation of her motives or character. It was a well known fact that Marguerite frequently corresponded with Melancthon, and that at his recommendation she had recently bestowed a pension upon a friend of his, one Claude Baduel, to enable the latter to pursue his academical studies. "It would be a truly royal charity, and one profitable to the Church, for your Highness to aid and support such a mind as this," wrote Melancthon to the queen of Navarre in his letter which appealed to her in behalf of Baduel. "The holy prophet Isaiah, lauding such almsgiving, says, that queens shall be the nursing mothers of students of Holy Writ; as such, the Church has long universally acknowledged you, and she will cherish your name to the latest posterity; for the true Church assigns high glory to the virtue of gratitude."* Thus recommended to her protection, Claude Baduel found a zealous friend in Marguerite: she enabled him to finish his education in Paris; and afterwards obtained his nomination as rector of the College of Arts, founded by the king in 1539 at Nîmes, Baduel's birth-place. As if all those whom Marguerite befriended were destined to aid in the overthrow of the Romish faith, Baduel, many years afterwards, resigned his rectorship of the College at Nîmes, and embraced Calvinism.

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* Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie. Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

The irreparable injury likely to be inflicted on the Church by the teaching of Melancthon, filled the more ardent champions of papal supremacy with dismay. The king was in vain reminded of the intimate ties he had recently contracted with the pope during his interview with Clement VII., at Marseilles, for the solemnization of the nuptials of the duke of Orleans with Catherine de Medici, and of his protestations of eternal fidelity to the Holy See, by which alone the ascendancy of the French in Italy could be maintained. The king, prompted by his sister, pertinaciously replied, "that, in his opinion, he was profitably serving both God and man, by seeking through the medium of conciliation, to heal the divisions in the Church." One day the cardinal de Tournon presented himself at his royal master's *lever*, with a richly bound book open in his hand. The novelty of such a display of literary zeal naturally attracted the attention of Francis, who inquired the title and subject of the book. "It is a volume of the works of St. Irenæus," responded the prelate. "I have just fallen upon the passage where this holy father relates that St. John, having unwittingly entered a public bath in company with the heretic Cerinthus, quitted it without delay, refusing to remain longer in a place desecrated by the presence of that blasphemer: yet you, sire, you are bold enough to summon Melancthon into the heart of your dominions; you do not fear the power of the deadly poison of heresy which he diffuses with subtle skill. Apparently, therefore, your majesty feels greater strength to resist temptation than the beloved disciple of Christ."* Francis made no reply to this indirect reproof; but soon after quitted his capital for Blois: Marguerite also, after gracing the marriage of the princess Isabel of Navarre by her presence, returned to Argentan without visiting Paris.

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* Lib. iii., Ep. ix. Ed Bretschneider. t. ii.

During the latter part of her sojourn at Alençon, another matrimonial negotiation which was intrusted to her, afforded Marguerite infinite solicitude and annoyance. The king and the marshal de Montmorency were anxious to effect a marriage between the count de St. Paul, youngest brother of the duke de Vendôme, and Adrienne, heiress of the noble House of Estouteville.† No trace of this affair remains on record, except in Marguerite's correspondence; and her allusions to an event, which seems to have excited great interest at the court of Francis, written to Montmorency, who was party to the project, afford little explanation. It appears that the king, who had most exalted notions of his kingly authority, resolved to marry Mademoiselle d'Estouteville to the count de St. Paul, although all the parties concerned strongly opposed the project. The count de St. Paul was deeply in love with a beautiful maid of honour belonging to queen Eleanor, named Mademoiselle de Bonneval, and ardently desired to espouse her. Mademoiselle d'Estouteville, piqued at this preference shown to another, very properly refused to listen to any overture tending to her union with the count; while Madame d'Estouteville, the mother, pertinaciously opposed the design altogether, and wished her daughter to ally herself elsewhere. It is difficult to divine upon what motive Madame d'Estouteville acted: her opposition could scarcely have been prompted by ambition; for, notwithstanding the immense possessions of her daughter, an alliance with a prince of the blood was more than a suitable match for the latter. The king, nothing daunted by these obstacles, resolved to vanquish the resistance of all parties, and to secure to the royal House of Vendôme the great heritage which the count himself appeared inclined to slight. The marshal de Montmorency therefore undertook, at the desire of his royal master, the task of persuading the count de St. Paul to break his *liaison* with Mademoiselle de Bonneval; while Marguerite was commanded by her brother to send for Madame d'Estouteville and her daughter to Alençon, and represent the matter in the most forcible manner she could, in order to induce them to submit to his will. The reason why this disagreeable commission was given to the queen of Navarre was, that the house of Albret, being distantly allied to that of d'Estouteville by the marriage contracted some thirty years before, between Jacques, sieur d'Estouteville, and Louise d'Albret, the king chose to take it for granted that Marguerite possessed a right to interfere in the disposal of the hand of the young heiress.

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* Florimond de Remond,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

† Adrienne was the sole child of Jean III., sieur d'Estouteville, and of Jacqueline d'Estouteville, dame de Noyon, de Briquebec, Hambic, and de Gacé. Mademoiselle d'Estouteville was born in 1512.

Marguerite's submission to her brother was ever implicit; and though she disliked greatly the negotiation imposed upon her, she did not refuse her mediation, which would have been of a more hopeful kind had M. de St. Paul himself requested her good offices. Madame de Estouteville was a shrewd, calculating woman, never at a loss for an argument, which she knew how to maintain with the utmost pertinacity and decision. Marguerite expresses herself as quite alarmed at the prospect of a possible contention with a person of such a positive and dictatorial character. The queen commenced her operations by inviting Madame d'Estouteville to visit her at Alençon; she enclosed also a letter from the king, stating it to be his royal wish that the baroness and her daughter should repair to confer with his sister. Marguerite expresses a doubt whether the testy dame would condescend to accept her invitation. She writes thus to the king on the subject: "Monseigneur, as soon as I understood from the Sieur Lyves your desire, I despatched the letter which it has been your pleasure to write to Madame de Touteville, and as soon as I receive her answer I will not fail to send it you. I hope, monseigneur, that the honour you have done her will subdue her obstination, and that she will come here disposed to comply with your will, and to obey you. Still, I greatly fear that we shall have much trouble with her daughter, who is so opposed to this alliance that if M. de St. Paul does not himself induce her to change her mind, my efforts will be useless, unless it be to impart your express commands. Nevertheless, monseigneur, now that I understand what your will is in this affair, I will use every effort to accomplish it; though you must remember that I am far from being contentious enough to refute their arguments; for, having always been brought up with you, I do not know how to threaten. Therefore, monseigneur, when I know the day they arrive, I shall request you to send me some efficient personage to respond suitably to their questions. I have the chancellor of the duchy here, who will doubtless serve you well in this affair."[*] The queen appears quite overwhelmed at the prospect of her conference with the redoubtable dowager; and, in truth, a more unpleasant task could not have been assigned to Marguerite than the difficult one of inducing two persons to marry, who seemed mutually resolved to avoid each other. Marguerite wrote rather reproachfully to Montmorency for suffering her to be implicated in so disagreeable an affair; and she also expresses her dread of Madame d'Estouteville's disputatious temperament more forcibly than she ventures to do to the king. "Mon cousin," she wrote, "I perceive you are determined that I shall experience something of the trouble you endure with all the great affairs which occupy you at court, and that you envy me the repose I hoped to take in this place, by giving me this commission to speak to Madame d'Estouteville. You know that my disposition

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[‡] MS. Bibl. du Roy., F. de Béth., fol. No. 8546. The chancellor Olivier de Neuville.

and hers are so different that we are not fairly matched; for to vanquish the will of a woman whom no one yet has been able to persuade, through the medium of one who is persuaded by everybody, seems to me to promise little result, except that she will conduct herself in her usual manner towards me. I do not say this to you in order to excuse myself, on account of my foolish good nature, from performing what it has pleased the king to command, and you to advise me to do; for, as you know, if you only had requested it, I should have had pleasure in complying; but I write to say that if you desire this affair to succeed, you must send a sterner head than mine to help me to reply to the things which you know none can say with better effect than Madame d'Estouteville, otherwise we shall take leave of each other—she, à Normande born, strong and as ungovernable as her sea, and myself, Angoumoise by birth, as humble and mild as the sweet waters of the Charente. I shall know by Sunday next whether she will condescend to come; then I will send you word without delay, that you may aid me. Meantime, I pray you let me hear frequently from you, as some solace for the discourse I shall be exposed to."*

Madame d'Estouteville, meantime, wrote a gracious acceptance of Marguerite's invitation; for though both her daughter and herself were hostile as ever to the proposed alliance, their position at court depended upon the docility they manifested to the imperious commands of Francis. Montmorency's remonstrances, it appears, with M. de St. Paul had been more successful, as the queen of Navarre says, in the letter which she hastens to despatch to the marshal, to inform him of Madame d'Estouteville's approaching visit: "If any one has right just now to complain of a grievance, it is myself, to whom you have committed an affair in which I am powerless to act. If I understood how to subdue a stubborn heart by stern daring, as well as you seem to know the way to vanquish the passion of M. de St. Paul, I promise you that the king should be speedily obeyed."† Marguerite again reiterates her petition that the king will send some authoritative personage to deal with Madame d'Estouteville and her querulous arguments: "I entreat you, hasten to send hither some personage capable of replying to a head filled with legal quibbles, for I understand neither the art of litigation, nor yet that of compulsion."*

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8519.

† Ibid.

The count de St. Paul, the object of this embarrassing negotiation, was a prince who had valiantly served the king at the battle of Marignano, and in the subsequent wars in Italy. He had been taken captive at the battle of Pavia, but succeeded in regaining his liberty by corrupting his guards. The count was born in 1491, and consequently he had entered his forty-third year; while the youthful Adrienne d'Estouteville, whom the king wished to bestow upon him in marriage, had only attained the age of twenty-one. Mademoiselle de Bonneval was the granddaughter of Germain, count de Bonneval, one of the favourite courtiers of Charles VIII.; and though she is celebrated by Marot for her beauty, she could not compete with Mademoiselle d'Estouteville in illustrious birth, nor yet in the gifts of fortune.

Vanquished by the remonstrances of his family, and by the displeasure of the king, the count de St. Paul at length consented to abandon Mademoiselle de Bonneval, and make his suit in earnest to the heiress. This tardy surrender did not subdue the determination of Madame d'Estouteville and her daughter; and they continued steadily to decline the alliance. Their visit to the queen of Navarre appears to have been very brief; but Marguerite affords us no details how the dreaded interview passed. The jealousy which Mademoiselle d'Estouteville cherished against her former rival, and her fears lest when she had bestowed her hand and her wealth on the count de St. Paul, that he would forsake her for Mademoiselle de Bonneval, were the reasons they then assigned for the rejection of this alliance. "I have sent you a letter written by Madame d'Estouteville to Monsieur du Bois d'Illiers, which you had better show to the king, to prove to him that I have done my best to terminate this affair according to his directions," wrote the queen of Navarre to Montmorency.†

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8549.

† Ibid, No. 8513.

"Nevertheless, I know, through another source, that so long as Bonneval is at court, Mademoiselle d'Estouteville will never consent to the alliance; for she believes that as long as Bonneval remains unmarried, she will be neglected by Monsieur de St. Paul. I am convinced that the mother would now willingly consent to the marriage, from the dread she has of losing the favour of the king. As for myself, I have done all in my power to vanquish their objections, and shall therefore excuse myself from further interference; because I do not wish to have any hand in dividing M. de St. Paul from the object of his affections; as we who are married ought naturally to shrink from interrupting the course of such true love; for we know not what may be the consequences of our act."

Marguerite makes no further allusion to Monsieur de St. Paul and his marriage in any of her letters. The affair eventually terminated, however, as the king desired. After the marriage of Mademoiselle de Bonneval, Adrienne d'Estouteville bestowed her hand on her royal suitor; and in token of his approbation, and to reward the count for his military services, Francis erected the barony of Estouteville into a duchy, to be jointly enjoyed by Adrienne d'Estouteville and François de Bourbon, count de St. Paul, her husband.*

The conscientious refusal of the queen of Navarre to interfere more in the arbitrary separation of M. de St. Paul from Mademoiselle de Bonneval, was dictated by her usual discrimination and sense of honour. Marguerite's notions on love and marriage were elevated and pure. Some one asked her one day what she understood by perfect love, as existing between man and woman. The queen promptly replied: "I call those perfect lovers who seek in the object of their attachment either perfection of beauty, goodness, grace, or any other qualities tending to virtue; and who are so high-minded that they would rather die than descend to deeds which honour and conscience reprove."

The next visit which Marguerite received in her retreat at Argentan, was from Madame Catherine, abbess of the convent of the Holy Trinity at Caen, the sister of the king of Navarre. At the time of Marguerite's marriage, the princess Catherine d'Albret was a simple nun in a convent at Prouille. After her brother's union with the duchess d'Alençon, through the influence of the latter she became superior of the convent of Montreuil des Dames, near to the town of Laon. Catherine subsequently received higher ecclesiastical honours ; she was promoted to be abbess of the Holy Trinity at Caen, an abbey possessing an annual revenue of 30,000 livres, and conferring extensive patronage on its superior. It appears that the fatigue of ruling her convent had somewhat impaired the health of Madame Catherine; and for change of air she came to spend a brief period with her royal sister-in-law at Argentan, a place not very distant from Caen.

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* Ste. Marthe,—Hist. Généalog. de la Maison Royale de France.

Marguerite sent the royal abbess back to her convent in her litter; the queen mentions this fact to the marshal de Montmorency, to excuse her delay in setting off to visit queen Eleanor, who was then much indisposed from the effects of a cold, at Cléry, near to Orleans.

CHAPTER VI.

Turbulence of the universities—Marguerite does not permit herself to be intimidated—She obtains a license authorizing Roussel to preach in Paris—The placards—Excitement of the universities—Arrival of the king in Paris—The placards appear again—Anger of Francis—Rigorous measures are adopted by the government against the Reformers—Arrest of the Lutheran preachers—Béda is banished from the capital—The council seek to implicate the queen of Navarre—The queen intercedes for Gérard Roussel—Accusations preferred by the council against Marguerite—Their reception by the king—Francis summons his sister to Paris to answer the charges preferred against her—He receives Marguerite with severity—The queen dissipates the displeasure of her brother, and presents the king with "La Messe à Sept Points," which she beseeches him to adopt throughout the realm—She persuades him to confer with Arnaud Roussel, and with the monks Bertaut and Couraut—Failure of the conference—The elector of Saxony recalls the permission he had given Melancthon to visit Paris—Acquittal of Gérard Roussel—Recantation made by the monks Bertaut and Couraut—Departure of queen Marguerite from Paris—Expiatory procession—Harangue pronounced by the king—Dreadful executions—Marguerite's patronage of the learned in Béarn—Circumstances attending the decease of Lefèvre—Anecdote of the queen of Navarre—Death of the cardinal Duprat—Assassination of the French ambassador, Maraviglia, at the court of Sforza, duke of Milan—The king prepares to avenge the death of Maraviglia—He demands passage for his troops through the duchy of Savoy—Refusal of the duke of Savoy—Francis makes a formal demand for the surrender of the duchy of Savoy to the crown of France—Character of the duchess of Savoy—She embroils her husband with the king of France—Savoy is invaded by the admiral de Brion—Success of the French arms—Death of Sforza, duke of Milan—Expedition of the emperor against Tunis—He delivers a multitude of Christian captives—Ovations decreed to the emperor on his return to Italy—

Reception given to Charles by the pope—They determine on the immediate assembly of a general council—Renewal of the negotiations between Francis I. and the emperor—Harangue of the emperor in Consistory—Its effect in France—Correspondence of queen Marguerite with her brother—The Imperial armies enter Savoy—Progress of the campaign—Devastation of Provence—The king establishes his camp at Valence—Montmorency is named general-in-chief of the armies of France—Speech of the emperor in council—The Imperial army enters Provence—The king of Navarre raises levies for the king—Marguerite's activity—Her correspondence with Montmorency—She departs for Nîmes—The count de Carmain and his company—The queen meets Montpezat at Montfrin—His troop of infantry—Illness of the sénéchale of Poitou—Arrest of a spy—Interrogated by the queen of Navarre—She sends him to the camp at Avignon—Marguerite visits the king at Valence—The delight expressed by the king at receiving her—Her correspondence with Montmorency—Intrigues of the courtiers—The queen visits the camp at Avignon—Her enthusiastic reception—She proceeds to Montfrin, and is received by the king of Navarre at the head of his Basque levies—Her letter to king Francis.

Paris, meanwhile, still continued agitated by theological dissension; and the universities became the arena of turbulent demonstrations against Luther, Calvin, and their adherents, who were now termed *Sacramentaires*, a name before applied in the eleventh century to the disciples of Beranger.*

The cardinals Duprat and De Tournon afforded every encouragement and countenance in their power to bestow to the faction, which thus kept alive in the capital the spirit of intolerance and persecution. In vain the mild and conscientious bishop of Senlis pleaded for the adoption of measures of a less sanguinary and arbitrary nature. Du Chatel, bishop of Tulle, joined in these remonstrances; yet the cruel zeal of the two cardinals prevailed, and the council proceeded to pass their measures. One day the cardinal de Tournon taunted Du Chatel, and insinuated that for a true son of the Church, the bishop's tolerance, to say the least of it, appeared suspicious. "I have spoken as a bishop ought to do; while you, on the contrary, perform the functions of an executioner," undauntedly responded Du Chatel.†

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* Berengarius, archdeacon of Angers, a follower of the famous John Scotus. He lived in the reign of Henry I. of France, and died A.D. 1088, after making a convert of Brunon, his bishop.

† Maimbourg,—Hist. du Calvinisme.

The fame of queen Marguerite suffered severely from the fanatic denunciations of the preachers of Paris. Although they dare not apostrophize her by name in their sermons, their allusions were too pertinent to render it possible for their hearers to mistake the object of such unmeasured abuse. Conscious of the rectitude and sincerity of her purpose, the queen of Navarre appears not to have taken sufficient pains to allay the vehement opposition by which she was assailed. As she never used her influence with the king to silence or to punish any of her accusers, she likewise gave herself no concern to propitiate them; nor did she suffer herself to be deterred by their threats or displeasure from adopting that course which she thought might best promote the progress of the Reformation in France. Marguerite thought that this her object might be advanced, as well as the mission upon which Melancthon was shortly expected in France, by the public preaching in Paris of some of the more moderate adherents of reform—men whose views on the matter coincided with the opinions of this reformer, that the purification of the Church of Rome was on the eve of accomplishment, when schism ought afterwards to cease by the voluntary submission of all sects and parties to the Holy See. In pursuance of this design, the queen of Navarre solicited a license from the king to enable Gérard Roussel and the two Augustinian monks, Bertaut and Couraut, to preach in Paris. With amazing inconsistency of design, Francis granted his sister's request; so that, whilst the privy council executed with unrelenting severity the royal edicts published against heresy, Roussel, who only in name retained his obedience to the Holy See, was suffered, in virtue of a license granted by the same authority, publicly to advocate the abolition of the sacrifice of the mass, with other so-called heretical dogmas, which were seized upon by the theologians, and made the subject of endless turbulent demonstrations.

At length matters came to a crisis. The controversy was raging with undiminished virulence, and all studies but that of theology seemed forsaken within the venerable walls of the universities of Paris, when, during the night of the 18th of October, 1534, the public buildings of the capital, the church doors, and the portals of the Sorbonne itself were covered with placards, assailing the sacrifice of the mass, the validity of prayers for the dead, the doctrine of transubstantiation, and, in fact, every distinguishing tenet of the Romish faith.* The movement appeared to be simultaneous throughout France. In every large town in the realm these placards were posted; and at Blois, where the king was residing, they were affixed to the gates of the royal castle. One universal cry of rage and consternation resounded throughout France; the members of the Faculties of Paris demeaned themselves as men demented, and clamoured that by a general *auto-da-fé* the daring blasphemers might be exterminated, who so reviled the sacred mysteries of the Holy Faith. The composition of these placards was attributed to Farel,† and they were printed, it was supposed, at Neufchâtel. They daringly assailed the doctrine of the Real Presence; but the impious and profane manner in which the subject was treated, excited disgust in the mind of the most ardent supporters of the Reformation. The opinions of the ancient Sacramentarians, as revived by Zuinglius, were maintained with fervid boldness; the Eucharistic elements were declared to be but the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace, imparted by faith to the recipient of them; "for how is it possible that the body of a man, of the age of from twenty to thirty, can be concealed in a bit of paste like their wafer?" was the argument terminating the largest placard, which was posted in fifty different streets in Paris.

The Protestants strenuously denied that the placards were affixed by persons of their communion; and accused the Sorbonne and the priesthood of having resorted to this device to rouse the dormant resentment of the king against his Lutheran subjects, and to counterbalance the influence of the queen of Navarre in religious matters. The unscrupulous daring of the universities, their factious attitude, together with their known exasperation at the project of the king relative to Melancthon's journey to Paris, strongly confirm the assertion. The Protestant population of France, dispersed, trembling, and almost decimated by the severity of the persecution which still impended, would not be guilty, it is to be presumed, of so suicidal a deed —one that, in the existing state of parties, could have no other possible issue than to infuriate their opponents. It was the opinion of the queen of Navarre, that the whole affair was but a cruel conspiracy to ruin the sectarians, devised by the Sorbonne, in concert with the cardinal de Tournon. On writing to her brother some years afterwards, on another affair of heresy, Marguerite says:— "Monseigneur, God be thanked that none of our subjects have been proved Sacramentarians, though we have been recently compelled to endure a burden of accusation not less weighty. I beg you, therefore, to remember the opinion that I formerly expressed to you, relative to those vile placards, that they were exhibited by persons who would fain prove others guilty of that their own misdemeanour."*

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* De Beze,—Hist. Ecclésiastique.

† Lettre de Sturm à Melancthon.

Francis meanwhile, on the report of the privy council, quitted Blois, and arrived in Paris to examine into the affair of the placards. During the first night of his sojourn in the capital, the placards again appeared, and were posted on the gates of the Louvre, as if in defiance of the royal authority. It is even asserted that through the medium of one Ferret, valet to the king's apothecary, they were actually affixed on the doors of the private apartments of Francis; and that little printed papers filled with the most offensive and abusive charges against the Romish priesthood, were secreted beneath the king's pillow.† In a paroxysm of fiery indignation, the king commanded the arrest of all the German preachers in Paris; and directed the parliament to commence a rigid investigation of the affair. Gérard Roussel and Marguerite's *protégés*, the two Augustinian monks, were arrested and thrown into prison. Numbers besides fell victims to the intolerance of the Sorbonne; for to be suspected of favouring heresy was sufficient to insure the loss of liberty, and in many cases of life. The parliament executed its commission with the greatest energy. The most inquisitorial system of *espionage* was adopted, and the vilest methods taken to discover concealed heretics. The Sorbonne, reinforced by the return of Noël Béda, filled the

* MS. Bib. Roy., F. du Suppl. F., No. 133.

† Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

city with seditious clamours. The syndic, whose recent banishment had not inspired him with moderation, or with greater respect for the ruling power, mounted the pulpit and delivered a furious invective against the king, who, according to him, was responsible for the recent occurrences, by his misplaced lenity towards the heretics. Francis was not in a mood to be insulted with impunity. On every side, both by the orthodox and the sectarians, he perceived his royal prerogative impaired, and treated with scorn and contumely. Scarcely, therefore, had Béda's presumptuous words circulated throughout the capital than a second decree expelled him summarily from France, nor could the earnest intercession of the Faculty procure his pardon from the king.*

The parliament at length declared its investigations terminated, and laid before the privy council the proofs of a conspiracy, which it pretended to have discovered, implicating the heretics in a plot to assassinate as many Roman Catholics, on a given day, as should be assembled at Divine service within the various churches in Paris.† This alleged conspiracy on the part of a handful of poor persecuted men, to slay some hundreds of their countrymen, in the midst of a populous and hostile city, was eagerly accepted by the council as a pretext for carrying on the persecution with relentless severity. The king's mind was embittered by the crafty insinuations of Duprat and the cardinal de Tournon, who failed not to implicate the queen of Navarre in the recent transactions. Her support of heresy was diligently represented to Francis as likely to bring about the overthrow of his royal authority. Montmorency appears also to have indirectly done all in his power to injure his generous patroness. Marguerite received many warnings to distrust the marshal; but she generously rejected suspicion, and often communicated the intimation to Montmorency himself, professing, at the same time, her implicit confidence in the loyalty of his friendship. The marshal never failed to deny the charges, attributing them to the enmity of the admiral de Brion, who, he asserted, wished to ruin him in the queen's esteem.

Marguerite meanwhile, whilst these tumultuous scenes were convulsing the capital, withdrew to the peaceful retirement of her castle of Nérac. It was there that she received the news of the arrest of Roussel and the reformed preachers of Paris. Her dismay was great; but she hastened to intercede for Roussel, whose ministry had been the means of conferring upon her such comfort. Still unsuspicious of the unfriendly offices by which Montmorency repaid her bounty, the queen addresses herself to him:—"I understand that they are now occupied at Paris with the trial of maître Gérard," wrote Marguerite. "I trust that when all the facts of the case have been well examined, that the king will deem him worthy of better recompense than the stake, as he has never professed opinions meriting such treatment, nor done anything which can be termed heretical. I have known him now for five years, and, believe me, that if I had detected in his conduct the least inclination for such errors, I would not have suffered anything so poisonous to circulate round me, nor would I now make petition for him to my friends. I entreat you, do not fear to bear public testimony in his behalf of these my words."* Marguerite's enemies, however, now possessed the king's ear, and the trials of the Lutheran ministers proceeded without abatement of rigour. The fanatical party dominating then in the cabinet profited by the queen's absence to instil all kinds of suspicions and resentments into the mind of the king. Their censures upon Marguerite's conduct became daily more daring. In times past, the slightest reflection on the fame or reputation of his beloved sister would have been vehemently silenced by Francis; now, the king listened to the representations of his ministers in gloomy displeasure. Emboldened by the evident anger of Francis, the cardinal de Tournon and his party exultingly predicted the overthrow of the obnoxious influence of the queen of Navarre at court. Her mediation had failed to procure the release of her chaplain Roussel—one whom Marguerite honoured with the title of her friend. Her influence therefore, it was confidently hoped, was on the decline, as the king seemed sensible of the injury such counsels inflicted on the nation at large.

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

† Ibid.

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* Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., MS. No. 8550.

At length the king one day coldly signified to the council that he had summoned the queen of Navarre to Paris, to answer in person the accusations they preferred against her. This intelligence afforded much consternation to Marguerite's enemies. They ventured to combat her influence while she remained at a distance from court; but they had no desire for a personal encounter. It is doubtful whether the representations of the council had really succeeded in kindling the resentment of Francis against his sister; or whether, indignant at the accusations they preferred, he purposely resorted to the course most repugnant to his bigoted ministers, by commanding Marguerite's presence in the capital, while apparently treating their remonstrances with deference.

Marguerite immediately obeyed the summons, and repaired to Paris without delay. Confident in the integrity of her intentions, and in the love of her royal brother, she fearlessly accepted the encounter forced upon her by the hostile theologians, whom she neither dreaded nor respected. The king, it is asserted, received his sister, on her arrival at the Louvre, with great severity, and bitterly reproached her for the evils which her support of heresy had brought on his kingdom.* Irritated, and overwhelmed with cares, Francis laid the blame of the civil commotions his vacillations had fomented to any cause rather than to his own inconsistency of conduct. Marguerite's absence in Béarn had long left the king without a companion into whose ear he could pour his anxieties; and perhaps it was as much for his own relief as out of deference to the council, that he commanded his sister to set out for Paris. Queen Eleanor appears to have borne no share in these transactions. Sensible of her own want of importance, she studiously regulated her conduct by the advice of the marshal de Montmorency, who found it more flattering to his vanity to patronize the neglected consort of his sovereign than to render support to his early benefactress.

The anger of Francis was soon subdued by the expostulations of his sister, and diverted from herself to the daring fanatics whose intolerance had filled the kingdom with discord. Nevertheless, Francis declared his intention of upholding the Church of Rome; and if, notwithstanding this admonition, the reformed preachers were bold enough to subject themselves to the censures of the Sorbonne and the parliament, they must submit to the consequences. Marguerite, on this occasion, opened at length to her royal brother her ideas on the subject of reform, as united to loyal obedience to the Holy See. She protested that her designs tended only to union in the Church, by promoting the voluntary abandonment by the priesthood of the erroneous doctrine and superstitious practices which so burdened their once pure ritual, that scarce a trace of its original beauty remained. She presented to the king the liturgy composed by Lefèvre and the Protestant divines of Béarn, and entitled by them, "La Messe à Sept Points," and she conjured her brother not to yield precipitately to the clamours of the factious universities. Marguerite, moreover, represented to the king the glory he would acquire by achieving this purification of the Church, which involved the eventual subordination of all sects to one earthly head—the bishop of Rome. As Francis seemed greatly impressed with her arguments, the queen obtained permission to send for the two Augustinian monks, Bertaut and Couraut, and for Arnold Roussel, brother of her chaplain, to confer with the king on the practicability of this scheme. The conference, however, produced no result; the vehement zeal of the three advocates of reform offended the king; and he dismissed them back to their prison in great displeasure.* It was only, after all, because Marguerite supported the cause of reform, that the king endured to listen to its defence. Without entering into the religious merits of the movement, Francis, when left to himself, opposed it as detrimental to his political designs. Another circumstance, also, at this juncture, may have had weight with the king, in inducing him to discountenance his sister's designs: the elector of Saxony withdrew his consent to the visit of Melancthon to Paris. Hostilities were on the point of recommencing between the emperor and Francis I.; all friendly communication between the princes of Germany and the court of France were displeasing to Charles V.; and the elector, consequently, from prudential motives, excused himself from fulfilling his promise to the king.

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* Mezeray,—Abrég. Chron. Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

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* Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

The presence of Marguerite in Paris, meantime, greatly hampered the designs of the cardinal chancellor, and his allies of the council. They found that her influence, even if it prevailed not with Francis to change the religion of the realm, was paramount; and that his obvious coldness towards those who had maligned the motives of the queen, offered little encouragement for a renewal of the charge. The trial of Roussel, also, had terminated, by the intercession of the queen of Navarre, in a complete and unconditional acquittal; and by the desire of his patroness, he was permitted to return to his abbey in Béarn. The two monks tendered a recantation of their opinions, and assumed again the habit of their order. Bertaut, daunted by the dangers to which the reformed faith had exposed him, remained firm in his allegiance to Rome. Couraut, as soon as he was safe beyond the control of the theologians of Paris, cast aside his habit, and fled to Geneva, where he died, an ardent disciple of Calvin.* Marguerite, moreover, persuaded her brother to send back the German preachers and professors, arrested in Paris, to their several sovereigns, without attempting to inflict the punishments decreed for their supposed connivance in the affair of the placards. This was accordingly done; the reformed ministers were delivered up to commissioners appointed by their respective sovereigns, to whose discretion it was left whether to enforce or not the penalties recorded in the minutes of the trials, which were likewise forwarded by the direction of the privy council.†

Marguerite's entreaties could not, however, prevail upon the king to vouchsafe as much mercy to his own unhappy subjects. Six miserable Lutherans, including a poor schoolmistress, were condemned to the stake; but as it was the king's intention to command a public procession through the streets of Paris, to expiate the blasphemous publication of the placards, the execution of the sentence was deferred until after the ceremony.* The horror manifested by the queen of Navarre was so intense at the frightful peace-offering she perceived her brother was resolved to offer to his universities, that she urgently petitioned the king to permit her departure into Béarn. Francis consented with reluctance; but doubtless he thought that the exultation of his theologians would be too complete at seeing the heretic queen of Navarre compelled to take part in the procession, and to give an apparent sanction to the bloody scene to be enacted at its close.

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* Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie. Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

† Strobel,—Lettre de Sturm à Melancthon.

Marguerite therefore probably quitted Paris at the commencement of the year 1535; for on the 21st of January the expiatory procession perambulated the streets in gloomy majesty, striking awe into the hearts of all beholders. All the religious orders of Paris took part in this procession, bearing aloft the sacred relics possessed by their respective convents. The body of St. Geneviève was borne along in solemn pomp by sixteen burghers of Paris, marching with bare heads and feet. The image of the saint was likewise carried in procession by the butchers of the capital, whose special privilege it is to bear this sacred figure.† Next marched the chapter of Nôtre Dame, the rector of the university of Paris, preceded by his mace-bearers, and the theologians of the Sorbonne, arrayed in their academical costumes, and carrying each a torch of white wax. Then came the Swiss guards, the choristers of the royal chapels singing melodious hymns of praise, and the king's chaplains. The kings-at-arms followed, attended by heralds and trumpeters wearing tabards sumptuously embroidered. Next marched ten priests bareheaded, arrayed in their chasubles, bearing a reliquary containing the head of St. Louis, followed by a train of ecclesiastics who each carried one of the relics preserved in the treasury of the Sainte Chapelle. The archbishops cardinals of Chatillon, de Tournon, and le Veneur, followed, wearing their robes and mitres: they immediately preceded the Host, which was borne aloft by the bishop of Paris, under a canopy of crimson velvet, powdered with fleurs-de-lis, supported by the dauphin, the dukes of Orleans, d'Angoulême, and de Vendôme. Around the Holy Sacrament marched two hundred gentlemen of the king's household, each bearing a torch. The king followed, marching alone, bareheaded, and carrying a torch of white virgin-wax. The cardinal of Lorraine walked after the king, attired in full pontificals. Afterwards came a countless throng of all the noblemen of the court, princes, ambassadors, and foreigners, each carrying a flaming torch "so that never was there before seen such an illumination." The court of parliament followed, the members wearing their scarlet robes, and holding lighted torches. The provost of Paris, the municipality, the guilds of the capital, the officers of the minor courts of the realm, the archers of the guard, and the domestics of the royal household, and of all the great officers of state—amounting to several thousand persons—closed this stupendous procession. Every individual carried a lighted torch, excepting the standard-bearers. Many of these standards were black, embroidered with penitential emblems and devices. The streets of the capital along the line of the procession, were hemmed with barricades, to keep off the pressure of the populace.* On the arrival of the *cortège* at Nôtre Dame, the sacrament was reverently placed on the high altar by the bishop of Paris. A solemn high mass was then chaunted in the presence of the king. Queen Eleanor and her ladies meantime arrived, and took their places in the choir of the cathedral, under a canopy of state. The royal party, on the termination of mass, adjourned to the bishop's palace, where Francis dined in public with the queen and princes. After the banquet the king ascended a throne and commanded that as many nobles and ecclesiastics of the procession as the hall could contain should be admitted to his presence. Francis then pronounced a violent harangue against heresy and its upholders. He alluded to the insult offered by the placards to the adorable sacrament, "through the machinations of certain wicked and blasphemous men of mean condition, and still more pitiful doctrine, by which our nation, and especially this good city of Paris—a city that, since its establishment as the seat of learning, has been resplendent for its cultivation of *belles lettres*, and pious and holy doctrine—finds its light obscured." Accordingly, Francis observed, that "he had given such commands as would make manifest to all, that if any unhappily had been seduced by the enemy of truth, it was not the fault of his government; and therefore it seemed good to him to order this solemn procession to implore the mercy of the Redeemer." Moreover, the king added, "that he had commanded the more notable of the delinquents to be rigorously punished, to serve as an example to all men to avoid such damnable heresy." In a fervour of religious excitement, the king concluded his harangue, by declaring, "that if his own arm were infected with so poisonous a doctrine, he would sever it, and cast it from his body; or, if he suspected his own son of favouring the pernicious heresy, he would deliver him to the just doom of the heretic and the blasphemer!"* Murmurs of applause ascended from the vast assemblage when Francis concluded his address, and the bishop of Paris, kneeling in front of the throne, humbly thanked the king for his gracious speech, in the name of the clergy of the realm.† In the evening, the six condemned persons were put to death by fire, with unheard-of tortures. By means of a cord, or as it was then termed "*par l'estrapade*," they were lowered into the flames; after some moments the miserable condemned were raised again from the pile, and exhorted to make recantation. This horrible scene was repeated several times, when the agonies of the poor Lutheran converts were ended by death.‡ How Marguerite must have mourned the fatal infatuation of her brother, when the news of this dreadful scene reached her in the retirement of her palace at Pau!

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* Théod. de Beze,—Hist. des Eglises Reformées de France.

† Sleidan,—Commentar. Book ix.

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

The queen of Navarre received no further molestation from her persevering enemies, the theologians of Paris. Satisfied with having wrung from the king so terrible a proof of his allegiance to the old faith, they possessed wiliness enough to abstain from urging Francis to extremity.

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* Godefroy,—Grand. Cérém. de France.

† Ibid.

‡ Théod. de Beze,—Hist. de Eglises Reformées de France.

They knew that the king was no zealot in religion; and they took salutary warning by the case of Louis de Berquin, where Francis, from being Berquin's staunch friend, had suddenly commanded his trial for heresy to be recommenced. The king, for aught they knew, might in like manner, at the solicitation of his sister, ordain liberty of conscience throughout his realm. The affair of the placards, however, rendered Marguerite more careful in her outward deportment; and from this period her solicitations to her brother for the pardon of condemned heretics became less frequent. Probably Francis made his sister understand that her interference in the religious cabals of the times embarrassed his government; and that her protection of the reformed ministers must be confined to those of her own household.

Gérard Roussel continued to enjoy the confidence of the sovereigns of Navarre; Marguerite always retained him about her person, until her favour procured his nomination to the bishopric of Oléron, notwithstanding Roussel's reputed heresy. The queen maintained the most friendly intercourse with the learned men assembled under her protection in Béarn. She frequently invited them to sup or to dine at her own table: laying aside her exalted rank while in their society, she conversed with them with simple familiarity, and encouraged them to instruct her in many matters on which she desired greater information. "This right noble princess," says a contemporary historian,* "delighted to converse while at dinner or at supper with the men of learning and gravity who surrounded her. Sometimes her discourse turned on medicine; as, for instance, on which were the most healthful and salubrious meats for the human body; and on objects of natural history, which matters she ably discussed with her physicians, the Sieurs Schyron, Cormier, and Esterpin, all men of most expert science, and very learned, who carefully watched her eat and drink, as is their custom with princes. At other times she would talk of history and philosophy with other erudite personages, who were always to be found in her palaces. There you might hear her discuss the truths of the Christian faith with Monsieur Gérard, bishop of Oléron, her chaplain, who was not only well versed in sacred literature and letters, but in every other species of learning. In short, there was scarce a single hour of the day that this great princess did not devote to some gracious, delectable, and useful occupation." It was at one of these friendly meetings, soon after Marguerite's return into Béarn, that a most affecting incident occurred, which made a deep impression on the mind of the queen. She had invited the venerable Lefèvre, who had reached the age of 101, to dine with her, as was frequently her custom, for Marguerite ever treated the good old man with filial respect. In the middle of the repast Lefèvre suddenly leaned back in his chair, and began to weep bitterly. The queen, much surprised, asked what afflicted him. Lefèvre replied that he was overpowered by the remembrance of the enormity of his offences in the sight of God. "I have now reached, madame, the great age of one hundred and one years, and I do not remember to have committed any sin to burden my conscience in quitting this world except one, which I believe can never be expiated. How can I appear before the tribunal of my God, I, who have taught the blessed Gospel of His Son in all its truth and purity to so many persons who have nobly sealed their testimony with their blood; and yet I have had the weakness to shelter myself in this asylum of refuge which you have provided, far from the spot where the glorious crown of martyrdom was to be won!" Marguerite gently consoled him; and with many eloquent words combated his fears. "God's summons has now arrived, madame," replied Lefèvre solemnly. "I feel that my departure is at hand." A feeling of awe silenced the guests at Marguerite's table, and likewise the queen herself. After the lapse of a brief interval, Lefèvre turned towards Marguerite, and requested her to accept his most precious bequest; before she had time to respond, he continued to express rapidly his wishes relative to his remaining property. He gave his books to Gérard Roussel; his clothes to the poor; and commended whatever else belonged to him to the service of God. "What will then be my share of your possessions?" demanded the queen. "The task, madame, of distributing all that remains to me to the poor." "I accept the trust," responded Marguerite, fervently; "believe me, I have greater joy in so doing, than if the king my brother had appointed me sole heiress of his kingdom." Lefèvre then rose from table, and took a solemn farewell of his friends; he afterwards requested the queen's permission to retire. Retreating then into the apartments which Marguerite had bestowed upon him in the castle of Nérac, he threw himself on his bed, complaining of great exhaustion. After a time he sank into a profound slumber; and while he thus lay unconscious of the tears shed around his bed by his friends, including his royal mistress herself, Lefèvre's good and virtuous spirit passed from earth. Marguerite related herself this curious detail of the decease of the staunch old reformer to the elector palatine, Frederick II., when he passed through Paris in the year 1538; and her recital was written down at the time by Thomas Hubert, gentleman of the chamber to the elector.*

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* Sainte Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre de l'Incomparable Marguerite, Reine de Navarre.

Profoundly afflicted at the loss she had sustained, the queen lavished on the memory of Lefèvre every honour in her power to bestow. She caused his remains to be carefully embalmed, and interred in the vaults of the cathedral church of Lescar, in the tomb which she had selected for herself. Marguerite was also present at the ceremony of his interment; to show her love and respect for the eminent virtues which distinguished Lefèvre's character, she followed the corpse to the grave as chief mourner.†

Marguerite ever showed the most tender regard for the memory of her deceased servants. Her poetic imagination invested departed spirits with the power of looking down from above on those they loved on earth; this opinion the queen ever warmly maintained; and during the latter years of her life it afforded her great comfort. Brantôme relates a curious incident relative to the queen's ideas on the subject of spiritual communications, which happened to a brother of his own, the capitaine de

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* Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique. Article Lefèvre.

† Sainte Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre de l'Incomparable Marguerite. Bayle.

Bourdeille, who, however, having much of the selfish flippancy that distinguished the character of his scandal loving brother, appears to have been quite unworthy of Marguerite's sympathy. The anecdote in question cannot be better given than in Brantôme's own language. "I had at one time," says he, "a younger brother, le capitaine Bourdeille; his father and mother destined him for a learned profession, and at the of eighteen sent him to Italy to study letters. He visited Ferrara on his journey, to pay his respects to Madame Renée de France, duchess of Ferrara, who bore my mother great affection. The duchess detained my brother to study at the university of Ferrara; but as he had no genius for letters, he paid little attention to his studies, but spent his time at court, where, after a time, he fell in love with a young French lady, a widow, in the train of the duchess, named Madame de la Roche. My father, finding that my brother made no progress in learning, at length recalled him; when Madame de la Roche, who bore him great affection, fearing that something might happen from her known preference for the religion of Luther which was then much the fashion, asked my brother to take her with him into France, to the court of the queen of Navarre, Marguerite, in whose service she had formerly been, and who had relinquished her to Madame Renée on the marriage and departure of the latter into Italy. My brother, who was young, inconsiderate, and delighted to have such good society on his journey, complied, and conducted Madame de la Roche to Paris, where the queen was then sojourning, who was very pleased to see her again; for Madame de la Roche had great wit, and was a beautiful, as well as an accomplished young widow.

"My brother, after spending some days with my grandmother and my mother, who were then at court, departed to visit his father; but soon being wearied of letters and learning, he quitted his parents and went to the wars in Piedmont and Parma, where, during five or six years sojourn, he acquired great repute. On his return he visited his mother, who was at Pau with the queen of Navarre, to whom he paid his respects as she was returning from vespers. She, who was the most excellent princess in the world, gave him a hearty welcome; and taking him by the hand, led him into the church, where she walked with him for upwards of an hour or two, questioning him on the progress of the war in Piedmont and in Italy; and also upon several other circumstances, to all of which my brother made her most satisfactory replies, for he was apt both in wit and deportment, being a very handsome young cavalier of four-and-twenty. At length, after having conversed with him for some time—for it was the custom and manner of this honourable princess never to disdain conversation with persons of suitable degree, as she took her daily walk—the queen suddenly paused over the tomb of Madame de la Roche, who had died about three months previously. Taking my brother by the hand, the queen said: "Mon cousin," for so she called him (because a daughter of the house of Albret had married into our family of Bourdeille), "do you not feel something move beneath your feet? No, madame," replied he. "Reflect well, mon cousin," rejoined the queen. "Madame, I do reflect well. I feel nothing move, for I am standing upon a solid stone." "Then I admonish you," replied the queen, without keeping him longer in suspense, "that you are standing on the tomb of poor Madame de la Roche, who is interred here beneath, and whom you so greatly loved. As departed souls possess consciousness after death, we may not doubt that this sweet creature, who has so recently quitted the world, felt a thrill at your approach; and if her emotion was not perceptible to yourself on account of the thickness of the tomb, doubt not that she experienced it. As it is a pious office to bear in remembrance those deceased persons whom we have loved, I beg you will sprinkle her tomb with holy water, and recite a paternoster, an ave Maria, and a de profundis; in doing which, you will prove yourself a faithful lover and a good Christian. I will leave you alone to execute this pious office." So saying, the queen departed. My brother did not fail to obey her, and then again sought her presence. He teased her afterwards a little on the subject; for she was accessible and affable, and permitted merry and jesting discourse."

During Marguerite's sojourn in Béarn, the grave closed over another personage, as renowned for his intolerance and cupidity, as Lefèvre was for piety. On the 8th of July, 1535, the cardinal chancellor Duprat, archbishop of Sens, expired at his castle of Nantouillet, after suffering long torment from a loathsome and agonizing disorder. During his last moments, he expressed great remorse for many of the deeds of his past life; and especially for not having observed in his public administration other law than his own sordid interest dictated. Duprat's wonderful talent for disputatiousness and legal quibble, brought him into notice at the commencement of his career. His pliant genius, when it served his purpose so to do, conformed itself to every disposition and circumstance: never discouraged by opposition or reverses, Duprat's indomitable energy overpowered every obstacle: in evil or in good he demonstrated the same inexhaustible resource, and generally achieved his object with unfailing certitude. Regarded with indifference by the king, Duprat retained to the last the authority intrusted to him by Louise de Savoie on her son's accession. A complete worldling, and addicted to dissolute pleasures, he ruled the Gallican churches, as metropolitan of the second archiepiscopal see, in the realm, and as first minister of state; an ecclesiastical command which became absolute during the six last years of his life, when the dignity of papal legate was conferred upon him. The wealth of the cardinal chancellor was enormous; and his ostentatious mode of living for a subject, and his equipages and crowds of retainers, were surpassed only by his contemporary, cardinal Wolsey, whose subtle craft often contended with the more unscrupulous daring of Duprat.

Cardinal Duprat left testamentary injunctions that his remains should be interred in his cathedral church of Sens, an edifice which, during the ten years he held the archiepiscopal dignity, he had never once visited. He also left considerable legacies to the public charities in Paris. On hearing that his late chancellor had bequeathed funds to build an additional ward for the sick at the hospital of the Hôtel Dieu, Francis sarcastically remarked: "It must be a very capacious one, if it is intended to shelter all the poor and the afflicted whom he has made."*

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* The king mulcted the heirs of Duprat in the sum of 100,000 crowns, under pretext of asking a loan for the state.

At the period when Francis lost his chancellor, who, rapacious as he was, possessed undeniable talent for carrying on the government as it was then constituted, war again menaced Europe. During the five years which had elapsed since the signing of the peace of Cambray, the puissant rivals, Francis and the emperor, never ceased in manifesting their mutual hostility. The military resources of their kingdoms, it is true, were exhausted, and incompetent to contend with the aggressive power of the other; but by diplomacy and counterplot, the two sovereigns indulged their animosity. Opportunity for a fresh invasion of the duchy of Milan meantime occurred, affording the king of France a pretext for rearing again the banners of France over the glorious field of Marignano, without infringing the treaty of Cambray. The circumstance was thus: Francis had secretly accredited an Italian gentleman, of the name of Maraviglia, as envoy from the court of France to Sforza, duke of Milan. The duke, with a great seeming show of friendly confidence, had excused himself from openly receiving a French ambassador at his court, on account of the displeasure such a step would give to his liege the emperor. Maraviglia was nephew to the chancellor of the duchy of Milan, Taverna; the king therefore—supposing this relationship to be a sufficient guarantee for the honourable entertainment of the proposed envoy—consented to give Maraviglia secret letters of credence addressed to the duke, while he was to be outwardly received at the court of Milan as a private gentleman who had sought Sforza's protection to adjust his own affairs, injured by the late war. For some time the French envoy had every reason to be content with the distinguished honour lavished upon him by Sforza, until the emperor, apprised of the sudden rise of a new favourite at the court of Milan, thought it incumbent to make some inquiries respecting Maraviglia's origin and probable political designs.

Charles's sagacity seldom failed to penetrate the most complicated plot. Maraviglia's true position in Milan was speedily discovered; and the emperor, with indignant reproaches, bade Sforza choose between his alliance or that of Francis. Charles's displeasure was so deep, that he even caused the negotiations to be suspended for the marriage of the duke with Christina of Denmark.[*] The abject fears of duke Sforza being thus excited, he diligently devised a scheme for giving the emperor satisfaction, with ample assurance of his fidelity to the Imperial interest By his directions, a nobleman of his court, the marquis Castiglione, got up a quarrel with Maraviglia's retainers, by applying some opprobrious epithet to their master in the open streets. The French envoy seems to have demeaned himself with great moderation in the affair; he not only refrained from personally avenging the insult, but, commanding his servants to abstain from hostile manifestation, appealed to the law for protection. Castiglione, however, determined to provoke a collision, paraded for several days before Maraviglia's abode, using the most offensive language, and followed by a train of armed dependants. The servants of the envoy at length made a *sortie en masse;* a bloody affray ensued, in which Castiglione was killed. The duke's object was now accomplished. Without shadow of a pretext, Maraviglia was arrested for the assassination of Castiglione, at the suit of that nobleman's relatives, and beheaded in his prison, without form or process, on the day but one following his arrest.[†]

The indignation of Francis was boundless; and he formally declared his intention of obtaining signal redress for the perfidious murder of his envoy and the punishment of the assassins, by arms, if not by negotiation. But the cowardly treachery of the duke of Milan afforded the king the opportunity he panted for, of passing again into Italy. It was not with the design of conquest, or to assail the liberties of Italy, as guaranteed by the treaty of Cambray, that the French hosts were once more to pass the Alps; but to avenge upon an insignificant and tyrannical prince the assassination of the envoy of France, and the flagrant violation of international rights.

About Easter of the year 1535, therefore, the king, finding that his menaces were treated with contempt by Sforza, despatched the president Poyet to the duke of Savoy, to demand passage for his army through that duchy. The duke, prompted by his consort, Beatrice of Portugal sister of the empress, rejected his nephew's request, hoping to avert the invasion of Milan; and feeling confident in the protection of the emperor. Francis, upon this refusal, instructed Poyet to make a formal demand for the resignation of the duchy of Savoy to the French crown, in accordance with the marriage contract of Marguerite de Bourbon with Philip I., duke of Savoy, which stipulated that the duchy was to be inherited, on the decease of their eldest son, by their remaining children according to the order of primogeniture, without distinction of sex.* The king, therefore, declared himself prepared to defend his claim to Savoy, as the heir of Madame Louise, his mother, only sister of the late duke Philibert II., and whose right over Savoy was therefore manifestly superior to that of the children of Philip I. by his second wife, Claude de Penthièvre. The king, moreover, complained of a multitude of other grievances against the duke of Savoy, each one of which he declared was sufficient to justify a declaration of war.

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[*] Daughter of Christian VII., king of Denmark, and of Isabella, sister of the emperor.

[†] Du Bellay.

During the lifetime of Madame, who possessed much influence with her half-brother, matters were prevented by her skilful mediation from coming to an open rupture between Francis and the duke of Savoy, whose interest it was to remain on amicable terms with his royal nephew. The duke, as has been before stated, espoused the sister of the empress Isabel, a haughty and imperious woman, celebrated for her beauty and her attachment to the House of Hapsburg. Beatrice had acquired the greatest influence over the mind of her husband; and possessing infinite wit and capacity, she exerted both to embroil the duke with his nephew the king of France. Presuming on the forbearance of Francis, the duchess of Savoy carried her enmity to the most daring lengths; so much so, that before the battle of Pavia, she induced her husband to pawn his ducal jewels, and to give the sum of 40,000 crowns, raised upon them, to Bourbon, for the service of the emperor.† By the counsel of the duchess Beatrice, the duke also accepted from the emperor the investiture of the county of Ast, the patrimony of the House of Orleans, while he refused to receive the Order of St. Michael from his nephew: but the crowning point of his offences was, that he had sent his son and heir into Spain, to be educated with the young prince of the Asturias Don Philip, at Valladolid.

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* Guichenon,—Hist. de la Maison Royale de Savoie.

† Brantôme.

On the refusal of the duke of Savoy to grant free passage to the French troops through his dominions on their expedition against Milan, the feeling of coldness and alienation subsisting between the two courts quickly ripened into one of avowed hostility.* The king quitted his capital for Lyons, where the army destined for the invasion of Milan was gathered. There he issued a proclamation declaring war against the duke of Savoy; and nominating the admiral de Brion generalissimo of his army, the king despatched him to make the conquest of that duchy. The duke, sensible when too late of the pernicious counsels so industriously tendered by his consort, made some overtures at this crisis to appease his royal nephew's indignation. He offered to relinquish the county of Ast to the emperor, if its possession by Savoy were displeasing to the king, provided he was assured that such a step would reinstate him in the favour of his nephew; "but to lose so important an acquisition, and still to remain in disgrace with the king, was a thing impossible for the duke to submit to."† On the other hand the indomitable spirit of the duchess Beatrice sought succour in the friendship of the emperor. At the very time when her husband was negotiating with France, to avert the menaced invasion of his dominions, it was discovered that a treaty was in agitation with the emperor, by which the duke proposed to cede to the Imperial House of Hapsburg all the territories possessed by the House of Savoy contiguous to the French frontier, in exchange for lands lying towards the centre of Italy.‡ This last proof of the duke's disloyalty was deemed decisive by Francis; the admiral de Brion entered Savoy at the head of a powerful army, and reduced the greater part of the duchy without a single hostile encounter. Chambery and Montmelian submitted to the French arms, and the counties of Bresse and Bugey were subdued. The admiral de Brion had penetrated as far as Mont-Cenis, when military operations were for a while suspended by the news of the decease of Sforza, duke of Milan, upon whose dominions the French were marching.*

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* Guichenon. Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. Mezeray.

The death of Sforza virtually annulled the treaty of Cambray as far as the claims of Francis on Italy were defined by that convention, and reopened the complicated question of Italian independence. The duke left no children by his consort, Christina of Denmark; and the renunciation by Francis of the rights of the House of Orleans to the Milanese, was made only in favour of Sforza and his heirs. Would the emperor now restore the heritage of their race to the descendants of Valentine Visconti, or bestow the investiture of the Milanese on some individual unconnected with its ancient dynasties? The emperor had just returned from his successful expedition into Africa, where, at the head of his brilliant Spanish chivalry, he re-established the dethroned Muley Hassan, king of Tunis, and delivered nearly 20,000 Christian slaves from the chains of the Infidels. The emperor, at the head of his victorious army of 33,000 men, awaited this *cortège* of captives; as they advanced, singing hymns of thanksgiving for their release from captivity, and preceded by a cross borne aloft by one of their number, Charles, in the face of his army, prostrated himself, his brow resting on the burning soil, in humble adoration of that sacred emblem.†

On his return to Italy, the emperor was received with ovations worthy of a conqueror of Europe. Naples and Milan echoed the plaudits, forgetful of the horrors and desolation to which they had been subjected by the resentment of the emperor; Rome also enthusiastically welcomed the liberator of the Christian captives of Tunis.‡. Pope Paul III., of the House of Farnese, an Italian, whose political sympathies tended to the exclusion of foreign domination in the affairs of Italy, received the emperor with cordial friendship. Together the pope and the emperor Charles V. determined on the immediate assembly of the long-postponed General Council. Unlike his predecessor, Clement VII., whose policy aimed rather at the aggrandizement of the Medici, than the exaltation of the Holy See, Paul III. hoped, by the strict union of the Papal and Imperial authorities, to extort the same concessions from the schismatics by means of the council, which the queen of Navarre, Melancthon, and the more moderate of the reformers desired to obtain from Rome. Great diversity of opinion still subsisted as to the locality most eligible for the meeting of the council. The pope desired that some town in Italy might be chosen for the purpose; while Charles naturally wished the bishops to assemble in a place under his own immediate control. The debates on the affair of the council were, however, temporarily suspended in the eager interest inspired by the renewal of the negotiations between the king of France and the emperor, relative to the investiture of the duchy of Milan.

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* Du Bellay.
† Sandoval,—Hist. del Emp. Carlos V.
‡ The emper r entered Rome April 6, 1536.

The plenipotentiaries of Francis were the Sieur de[*] Velly and the bishop of Maçon, ambassadors of France at the Papal and the Imperial courts. The emperor's representative was his chancellor, Nicholas Pierre de Granvelle. Francis demanded the investiture of the Milanese for his second son, Henry, duke of Orleans, the consort of Catherine de Medici: this granted, the king offered to lead his forces against the Turks; to join heartily with the emperor and the pope for the suppression of heresy; and to accept for himself and his kingdom the authority of the approaching General Council.[*] The moderation of these proposals greatly embarrassed the emperor, whose real designs tended not to peace. Charles had resolved to keep the Milanese in his own imperial house; nevertheless the unanimity with which Italy demanded an independent duke to reign over that important territory compelled him to dissemble; added to which consideration, his fleets and armies were not in fit condition to enter upon the campaign he meditated. Granvelle therefore replied that his imperial master was willing to bestow the investiture of the Milanese on the third son of

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[*] Du Bellay.

Francis, the duke d'Angoulême, on condition that he espoused the daughter of the emperor, or at least a princess nearly related to the House of Hapsburg. Two causes subsisted, the chancellor averred, sufficiently grave to prevent a cession of the duchy to the duke of Orleans. The first was, that being already married, he could not comply with one of the indispensable conditions imposed by the emperor; the second reason was, that the duke being the husband of Catherine de Medici, he could as duke of Milan assert the pretensions of his consort to Florence, Tuscany, and to the duchy of Urbino, and thus kindle again at pleasure a disastrous war in Italy.* After much hesitation, the ambassador De Velly, to the surprise of the emperor, accepted these conditions. The chancellor de Granvelle then put the question to the ambassadors, whether, as they embraced the proposals of the emperor, they had had powers confided to them to sign the treaty. De Velly replied, with some embarrassment, that so wide a deviation having been made from the original terms proposed by the king, he did not deem his powers sufficient to sign a treaty, but that he would despatch a courier without delay to Paris to demand instructions. The ambassadors then requested some explanation from Granvelle relative to the warlike preparations in progress throughout the Imperial dominions; and especially as to the destination of the strong fleet assembled in the port of Genoa under the command of Andrea Doria. The chancellor replied that the fleet was destined to repel the expected invasion of the Turks on the coasts of Italy and Sicily; and that the army was assembled to keep the Italian States in subjection, who might otherwise rise, and attempt to put the king of France in forcible possession of the duchy of Milan. It was further intimated by the wary Granvelle, that in case the treaty was accepted by Francis, the emperor would expect the king to find a suitable husband for the widowed duchess of Milan; and insinuated that the young king of Scotland, then affianced to Marie, daughter of the duke de Vendôme, would be considered an acceptable spouse, both by the lady herself, and by her imperial uncle.†

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* Du Bellay. Sleidan.

† Ibid.

When Charles was informed that the French ambassadors had not powers to sign the treaty, he pretended to feel violent indignation. Velly was summoned to his presence; and the emperer demanded whether the facts were precisely as represented by his chancellor. The ambassador admitted the perfect correctness of Granvelle's report, and was proceeding to add other observations, when Charles angrily exclaimed: "Then, if you have no powers to conclude the negotiation, it is you who have been amusing me with hollow professions, and not I who have done so to you. Having said what I have said, I will confer no more till you prove to me that you possess ample powers to treat for peace from your sovereign."*

A few days after this scene, Velly accompanied the bishop of Maçon to pay his respects to the emperor, just as he was setting out to hear mass. Charles greeted De Velly with angry coldness, and asked in a most ungracious manner whether he had received despatches from the king his master. Velly replied in the negative. The emperor rejoined: "I do not wish to blame the deeds of the king your master, neither do I intend to justify my own proceedings in secret. Monsieur de Maçon, it gives me pleasure that you happen to be present. Follow me, therefore, both of you, into the consistory, where, in the presence of the pope, you shall hear my final determination on these matters."† The ambassadors of Venice arriving at the moment to salute the emperor, Charles bade them follow in his suite into the presence of the pope.

When the emperor entered the Hall of Consistory, Paul had not quitted his private apartments in the Vatican. The emperor, therefore, conversed for the space of half-an-hour in a most gracious manner with the cardinals and nobles present, instead of accepting the pope's invitation to join him in the Vatican, which was conveyed to Charles by a chamberlain. At length Paul made his appearance, accompanied by a numerous suite of ecclesiastics. The emperor and the pope took their seat under a dais at the upper end of the chamber; and after exchanging a few words together in a low tone, Charles rose and declared that he had subjects of great importance to speak of in the presence of the pope and the holy conclave. Paul then desired all the personages present to leave the hall, excepting the cardinals. "No," interposed the emperor; "let no oneleave; what I have to say I wish it to be heard by all the world." He then commenced the most intemperate harangue against Francis and his subjects. He detailed the rise and progress of his wars with the king; and gave a sketch of the numberless treaties he had vouchsafed to grant to the French, all which they afterwards treacherously violated. He maintained that Francesco Sforza acted justly and impartially in causing the French envoy, Maraviglia, to be beheaded; and that Francis resented this affair merely because it afforded a plausible pretext for a third invasion of the Milanese. The emperor concluded his oration by proposing three things for the acceptance of his rival, the king of France: either peace with the duchy of Milan on the conditions signified by Granvelle—a single combat—or war, "until either the king or himself was reduced to a level with the poorest private gentleman in Europe. But," continued the emperor, with indecent sarcasm, "if I had no better soldiers than the king of France has, I would go immediately with my hands bound, and with a halter round my neck, to implore my enemy's mercy."*

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* Du Bellay

† Ibid.

The assembly, when the emperor terminated his oration, remained mute with consternation. Pope Paul III., during its course, rose from his throne, resumed his seat again, and seemed by his gestures to be on the point of arresting the impetuous torrent of words flowing from the emperor's lips. The half of this harangue was spoken in Spanish, the other half in Italian, as the languages seemed most expressive of Charles's vehement wrath. The French ambassadors were confounded. They knew not how to act, nor in what strain to reply to language so outrageous and insulting to their sovereign and his subjects. At length the bishop of Maçon, who possessed the readiest wit of the two, stepped into the august circle and excused himself from replying; "for the greater part of the discourse having been spoken in the Spanish tongue was lost upon him, as he did not understand the language." Velly, whose diplomatic attainments were of a very superior order, strove to regain his self-possession; and, with some hesitation, requested permission to address the assembly. Charles haughtily replied, "that he declined to listen to any more speeches on the subject; that he wished for deeds and for fewer words. He would desire his ministers to send a copy of his harangue to the ambassador, when the Sieur de Velly might answer it at his leisure."* The Consistory then dispersed; its members separating in confusion and consternation indescribable.

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* Discours de l'Empereur dans le Consistoire. Du Bellay.

The following day, however, the emperor being better advised, refused to give the ambassadors a copy of his harangue; and the pope besought Velly to soften the relation of this scandalous scene as much as possible to his royal master. The ambassadors replied that their duty to their sovereign compelled them to render account, to the best of their memory, of a scene as disgraceful as it was public. The harangue, meanwhile, had been exactly transmitted to France by the cardinal du Bellay, who, happening to be present in the Consistory, committed the whole to paper by a prodigious effort of memory immediately on the dispersion of the assembly, together with the explanation of the most offensive articles which the emperor, at the persuasion of the pope, was induced to offer afterwards.

This unfortunate scene in the conclave excited universal indignation throughout France. Marguerite, who had had some experience of the emperor's political designs, expressed the deepest resentment. From her retreat in Béarn she wrote to her brother to assure him of her sympathy, and to encourage him in his opposition to the emperor's unreasonable demands. Velly's negotiation continued for some weeks afterwards in Rome; but, as Marguerite predicted, it eventually failed, as did also the mission of the cardinal de Lorraine, whom the king despatched to confer with the emperor at Sienna. The emperor's *ultimatum* was then,—the evacuation of Savoy by the French, and the acceptance of the duchy of Milan for the duke d'Angoulême, on the conditions proposed by the Imperial plenipotentiaries, Granvelle and Des Cannes.* "Monseigneur," wrote Marguerite, "if my opinion could be expressed as forcibly as I desire to serve you by what I write, I should say that it is impossible to make a better reply than you have lately done to the emperor. I feel aggrieved that you should think it needful to recall to me the subtle manœuvres which he has practised upon you; and especially when you sent M. le cardinal to him, for I have them clearly before my eyes; knowing, as I do, the courteous and honourable mode of your communications with him, and the foolish and extravagant proposal that he has since returned, thinking to make himself appear the reverse of what God has created him. This alone is enough to inspire every woman in your dominions with the wish to be a man, in order to have a hand in humbling such arrogance."† The reply made by the king, and so warmly applauded by his sister, was a peremptory refusal to reinstate the duke of Savoy in his dominions until after the signature of the treaty, bestowing the Milanese on the duke of Orleans.

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* Mém. de Martin du Bellay.

The angry passions of both monarchs being now inflamed to the utmost, war became inevitable. In Savoy, Turin opened its gates to the king's troops; and the duke and his haughty consort were compelled to fly from their dominions, and place themselves under the protection of the emperor at Milan.‡ The Imperial armies, under De Leyva, entered Savoy to oppose the invading forces; and to fight their way until their victorious hosts encamped on the fruitful plains of Provence.

Throughout their sovereignties, meantime, the king and queen of Navarre diligently watched the interests of Francis. Occupied by the fortification of Navarreins, and in frequent journeys throughout Guyenne, the king of Navarre was often absent from his consort. Marguerite frequently complains of her husband's omissions in sending her news of his proceedings when absent. Henry was far from being so indefatigable a writer as Marguerite, whose pen could seldom have been laid aside, to judge even by the voluminous correspondence, in prose and verse, transmitted to us. The defence of the province of Guyenne was committed to the king of Navarre, who diligently commenced preparation for the impending invasion of France. In Béarn, Marguerite herself visited many of the frontier fortresses, encouraging their garrisons by gracious words. The greatest activity prevailed throughout the kingdom. The defence of Picardy was intrusted to the duke de Vendôme; the duke de Guise had the government of Champagne confided to him; the count de Humières assumed the command in Dauphiny; and Barbesieux, admiral of the fleet, repaired to Marseilles to defend the city and the coasts of Provence against the attack of Doria.* The admiral de Brion received commands to fortify the places captured in Savoy, and after leaving garrisons of sufficient strength to repel a besieger, to return to France with the remainder of his forces.

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* Mem. de Martin du Bellay.

† MS. Bibl. Roy. F. de Béth., No. 8507.

‡ Guichenon,—Hist. de la Royale Maison de Savoye.

The plan of the approaching campaign was to be strictly defensive; no encounters between the hostile armies, or feats of knightly prowess, were to illustrate the advance of the emperor on the heritage of the Valois. The martial ardour of the brave French chivalry was to be repressed; and their weapons used for the desolation of their own fair land, rather than broken in conflict with their foes. A terrible system of defence was adopted: by famine and consequent pestilence, Charles's legions were to be decimated, and driven back with ignominy to his own lands. The country was to be ravaged until the fruitful plains of Provence resembled the arid desert: the peasant was commanded to burn his crops, and the noble to dismantle his castle. All small towns devoid of fortifications, and unable to offer defence against the enemy, were levelled to the ground. The captain de Bonneval was sent by the king to make known to the unfortunate inhabitants of Provence the dire necessity which compelled the adoption of these measures for their deliverance from calamity still more insupportable.

Montmorency was named by the king, generalissimo of his armies. The king departed from Lyons, and established his camp at Valence, a situation which enabled him to provide for the safety, either of Provence, or of Dauphiny. To command the course of the Rhone, and to cut off the supply of provision, should Charles turn his arms towards that portion of the kingdom watered by the river, Francis resolved to establish another camp at Avignon. He therefore divided his army into two divisions; the command of the largest and most important part of which he intrusted to Montmorency, with unlimited powers. "I know your valour, and your prudence," said Francis to the marshal in the presence of the council:* "you have given me signal proof that you possess the first of these qualities; but I stand now most in need of the second. Let prudence guide your measures; you are aware of the importance of the trust which I confide to you. Go, therefore; maintain your high renown, by saving my kingdom. You will act in all things as circumstances direct."

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* Du Bellay.

The emperor, meantime, joined his army in the duchy of Savoy, where the defection of the marquis of Saluzzo enabled the Imperial forces to recapture again most of the fortresses garrisoned by French troops. The conquests of Leyva, and the retreat of the admiral de Brion, left the passage open to the frontiers of France. Charles, therefore, determined no longer to pursue a conquest which must fall of itself, if his grand scheme for the invasion of France succeeded. Antonio de Leyva, and many of the emperor's most notable captains openly combated his designs, while in secret they urged Charles to advance upon Provence, which they represented as a country destitute of troops, and so disaffected to the royal cause, that on the appearance of the Imperial banners the people would hasten to throw off their allegiance to a prince by whom they had been so misgoverned.

Whilst the emperor encamped at Savilliano, the pope made another ineffectual effort to reconcile the monarchs, by sending the cardinals de Trivulzio, and Carpi, with the offer of his mediation. When asked by Trivulzio whether, provided the king reinstated the duke of Savoy, he was still willing to adhere to the conditions proposed by himself in the conclave, Charles replied in the negative;

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* Du Bellay.

adding, "that he never made the proposal to grant the investiture of the Milanese to a son of France in sincerity, or in the belief that it would be accepted by the king; but merely to gain time for the completion of his military preparations: while the king had acted in the same way, by nearly achieving the conquest of Savoy whilst he was trying to deceive him by a feigned negotiation."*

The emperor, meanwhile, endeavoured to detach the potentates of Europe from their alliance with France. He sent an envoy to the king of England, offering to be reconciled to him; and protesting that every spark of the resentment he once nourished against the English monarch had become extinct after the decease of his aunt, Catherine of Arragon. He also sent Henry a copy of his speech against the king of France, spoken in presence of the Consistory. Henry, however, returned a very cold and evasive reply. He ordered the ambassador to inform the emperor that in the first place he desired to receive an explanation from him respecting some calumnious expressions alleged to have been used by Charles respecting himself; that he knew from good authority that the speech sent for his perusal was incorrect, and expressed not half what his imperial majesty had thought proper to utter in presence of the Consistory; and, finally, that he would never sanction Charles's ambitious designs on the territories of his good brother and ally, the Christian king. Henry likewise notified to the imperial envoy, that a treaty was in agitation between himself and Francis, for the betrothal of the infant princess Elizabeth of England, with the duke d'Angoulême.†

Although the king of England thus gave the emperor plainly to perceive that he need not rely on his support for the prosecution of the war against Francis, Charles's hopes of success remained not the less sanguine. To flatter the emperor, and to give him the sole credit of having devised an expedition the success of which no one doubted in his heart, the ministers of Charles pretended the most unconquerable reluctance to enter the French territories. Antonio de Leyva, in the presence of the council, knelt at his master's feet, imploring him to yield to the remonstrances of his faithful and loyal servants, and to satisfy his resentment by re-establishing the duke of Savoy in his dominions. The emperor rose, and in a long harangue recapitulated his projects. "No!" exclaimed he, "let France in her turn languish under the insupportable miseries she has been the means of entailing for many years past upon Italy. Let her habitations be pillaged; let her country be ruined and desolate, her towns burned by fire; let consternation reign throughout her borders—woes which for thirty years she has inflicted upon Italy. Paris, and the crown of France, must be the guerdon of our victory, and not Piedmont or Turin! Let us prove if indeed a Frenchman on his own soil be the renowned knight you say; whether he is wise, politic, and cautious. What! know you not yet his disposition, after the many trials and examples of his constancy which we have made? A Frenchman is worth little when the first heat of his natural impetuosity of character is spent; he knows not how to dissimulate and to labour with patient courage; his endurance fails him under such circumstances, and his strength sinks! The only way, be assured, to terminate these wars is, for the king of France to become emperor and king of Spain in my stead, or that I myself should become king of France in his."* The emperor so far realized his projects, at least in imagination, that it is recorded he promised the viceregal sceptre of France to Antonio de Leyva; a reward which that renowned general firmly believed would ere long become his own, as it had been predicted to him by an astrologer that he should die in France, and be interred at St. Denis.

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* Du Bellay.

† Hume. Du Bellay.

On the 25th day of July, 1536, the emperor Charles V. crossed the river Var, the boundary between the kingdom of France and the duchy of Savoy, and encamped at St. Laurent, a small town of Provence. The Imperial army consisted of thirty-six thousand five hundred infantry, and ten thousand horsemen; Charles's fleets, under the com mand of Doria, cruised in the Mediterranean, conveying artillery and abundant ammunition of every description. His principal captains were Antonio de Leyva, general-in-chief, the marquis de Guasto, Ferdinand of Gonzaga, marquis of Mantua, and the duke of Alba. To all these renowned chiefs, the highest posts in the administration of the conquered realm of France had been allotted.

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* Du Bellay.

The peril of her beloved brother aroused the heroic spirit of the queen of Navarre, and she entered with the greatest enthusiasm into his plans of defence. Couriers constantly passed on their road between Lyons and Pau, bearing the correspondence of Francis and Marguerite, written in cypher. The only member of his royal family in whom the king confided, Marguerite at this period became the depository of the secrets of the state. Overpowered with intolerable anguish, queen Eleanor had retired to Amboise with the king's daughters, the princesses Madelaine and Marguerite, to await the issue of a war so momentous in its results to herself, whether it terminated in the triumph of her husband, or of her brother.

Whilst the king of Navarre employed himself in raising a body of 4,000 troops in Gascony, Guyenne, and Béarn, for the service of the king, Marguerite undertook the government of her husband's states, including the care of keeping diligent guard on the frontiers. Henry's negotiation proved a difficult affair; and the delays and oppositions which he encountered from the chieftains of the various bands, became a source of great annoyance to the king, who was eager to join the royal camps of Valence or Avignon. Meanwhile, the count de Carmain, the representative of a younger branch of the House of Foix, and therefore a relative of the king of Navarre, valiantly raised a band of a thousand Gascons, and prepared to march with them to the aid of the king. This loyal devotion met with warm applause from the queen of Navarre, who expresses great indignation at the lukewarm zeal of her Basque subjects, in not joining at once the standard of the king of Navarre at Toulouse. Marguerite now resolved to remove nearer to the seat of war, in order better to assist her brother; with the consent of the king of Navarre, therefore, she quitted Pau, leaving the king's lieutenant in Guyenne, the Sieur de Burie, guardian for the time being of the principalities of Béarn, Foix, and Armagnac, and arrived at Nîmes in time to inspect the troops under the command of the count de Carmain, before their departure for Avignon. Marguerite wrote to the Marshal de Montmorency to apprise him of her intentions, and also to recommend to him the count de Carmain. "Mon nepveu," wrote the queen to Montmorency, "the count de Carmain, my cousin, is about to join you, bringing, as I have been told, a famous band of old and experienced soldiers. The count displays such hearty good-will in doing his duty, that this fact, combined with my knowledge of his character and loyal disposition, induces me to commend him to your favourable notice. He is the only member of the House of Foix who can render the king effectual service; therefore, I pray you, out of love for the head[*] of his House, give the count your protection. I purpose going to Nîsmes to inspect his company; where I wish I might find the Basque troops also arrived, in like array, and efficient for service. I am exceedingly wrathful at their tedious delays; so much so, that instead of offering excuse for them, I am half minded to ask you to punish them; for there is no reason in their tardiness. I hope, nevertheless, to see them soon; and then I will myself tell them my opinion of their conduct. The king of Navarre, who had taken up his quarters close to Toulouse, has returned to Grenade to hasten their departure. He has experienced so much trouble and annoyance that he wishes he had never spoken to the captains of the troops, on account of the mistakes they have made, and the little energy they display."[†]

At some place close to Nîmes, probably Montfrin, which Marguerite, however, does not specify by name, she met the Sieur Jean de Montpezat, surnamed le Capitaine Carbon, from the swarthy hue of his complexion, with a troop of infantry, likewise levies from the south, which he was conducting to Avignon. Marguerite arrived by water at this place, a mode of travelling which she preferred to the uneasy motion of a litter. Montpezat's troop was drawn up on the banks of the river, to receive the queen on her disembarkation. Marguerite found herself obliged to make a sojourn of a few days at Montfrin, on account of the indisposition of her lady of honour, the

[*] The king of Navarre.

[†] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8550.

sénéchale of Poitou, who was ill from the fatigue of her royal mistress's rapid journey. The queen employed herself during this interval in writing letters to her brother, which she sent to the marshal de Montmorency to forward. "Do not hurry yourself about providing guard for the Rhone on this side of its banks whilst we remain in this neighbourhood, for we will keep good watch: if the emperor could only gaze upon the dusky faces of the soldiers in our troop, who are all of Carbon's complexion, it would scare him so greatly that he would not dare approach us. If our Basques turn out to be such serviceable people, I am sure you will feel satisfied with them,"* wrote Marguerite to Montmorency.

The following day an incident occurred which served to dispel the weariness of Marguerite's sojourn at Montfrin with le capitaine Carbon and his company. A spy was arrested by some of the soldiers of the troop, seized while making diligent inquiry as to the number of men Montmorency had encamped at Avignon, and what force of artillery was posted along the Rhone, between the camp and Valence. Marguerite commanded the delinquent to be brought into her presence, that she might examine him herself. The man pretended to be half-witted, and for a long time nothing could be elicited from him. At length, by the aid of Carbon's sterner expletives, Marguerite ascertained from her trembling prisoner that money had been offered him to report the movements of the royal troops, and to poison the wells in the neighbourhood. Intimidated by the frowning faces of Carbon's fierce soldiers, the unfortunate culprit, well aware that some kind of confession would be extorted from him, implored the queen to grant him a respite of an hour, when he would confess what he knew, if she promised on her royal word that no harm should befal him. Compassionating the trepidation of her prisoner, Marguerite consented to spare his forfeit life, provided he told everything; but she added, that she should be obliged to send him to the camp at Avignon in custody of Carbon's troop, for his depositions to be taken in the presence of the general-in-chief. "I knew that you would bear me out in this my promise, mon nepveu," wrote Marguerite to the formidable Montmorency in the despatch she instantly forwarded to him,* "yet I do not believe the prisoner will accept these conditions; for it is my opinion that he will rather die than confess the truth. He shall be immediately conducted to you." The ultimate fate of the poor spy is not recorded; doubtless, if he did not avail himself of the luck which brought him in the first instance before the tribunal of so merciful a judge as Marguerite, and by ample confession of his offence obtain the fulfilment of her promise, his interrogatory before the stern general-in-chief would summarily terminate at the foot of the gallows.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8549.

From Nîmes, Marguerite journeyed up the Rhone to visit the king at Valence. Francis greeted his sister with delight. The affection and courage which she displayed in advancing into the very centre of a country occupied by armies, and daily exposed to the ravages of the enemy, received his warmest acknowledgment. "When I arrived the king was on the ramparts superintending the fortifications which he is constructing. When he saw me his face expressed so much joy, and he gave me such a welcome by words, that at any rate I felt convinced my arrival had not increased his numerous chagrins," said Marguerite, in the first letter which she wrote to Montmorency from Valence.† "The king, nevertheless, gallantly assured me that his cares were only just beginning by my arrival. I think, however, his health is good; and that he does all in his power to keep up his spirits. I must tell you, that never master felt more perfect contentment and confidence in any subject than the king does in you. He said to me that you had come forward for his service *au trot de M. de Mauléon*, which means that you have both put your hand on your sword and into your purse at one and the same time, which is more than any other servant has yet done: though there are those at court who have the means, though not the will, to follow your example. There arrives no stranger at this camp to whom the king does not praise you; so much so, that no commander ever before possessed your repute." At this period Montmorency had attained the height of his favour with the king and his sister. He had successfully removed from Marguerite's mind even the shadow of a doubt as to the sincerity of his professions of devotion; and consequently the queen's great influence was constantly used to promote his elevation. Marguerite's scornful allusion to the parsimony of the admiral de Brion, who "wanted but the will to serve his royal master," demonstrates the very decided part the queen took in the intrigues of Montmorency and Brion to overthrow each other in the favour of their sovereign, and which even the imminent peril of the kingdom failed to suspend.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8514.

† Ibid, No. 8550.

Marguerite intended to despatch this letter by her physician Goinret, who was about to pay a professional visit to the camp at Avignon; but as some event prevented Goinret from setting off at the time he proposed, the queen, ever indefatigable with her pen, wrote the same evening a second letter to the marshal, giving him later news of the proceedings at Valence. "The king came to confer with me to night privately for upwards of an hour after his supper; he again expressed his satisfaction at your deportment. The king grants audience to all who request that honour; and he takes so much trouble with his affairs, that he will soon learn by experience what pains you have daily borne for him. It strikes me that it would be advisable for you to praise the king in your letters for the great attention he pays to affairs, and to beg him to persevere thus for another month. He has begun so well!" Marguerite next entreats Montmorency to send her word without delay when the Basque levies, which seem greatly to haunt her mind, arrived in camp. She also promises to use her influence with the king to persuade him to permit the duke of Orleans to join Montmorency at Avignon. The duke, whose attachment to the marshal was great, earnestly desired to combat the Imperialists, and had entreated his aunt to use her good offices to obtain him his father's permission to quit Valence; a privilege not the less eagerly desired by Montmorency, whose vanity was flattered at the thought of having one of the sons of his sovereign under his command. The queen then recommends Goinret to the regard of the marshal, "not for his outer aspect, but for his learning and great experience, of which I have had ample testimony. I send you by him, mon nepveu," continues Marguerite, "a psalter translated into the French language, that the words which the king has caused his poets to record may be imprinted on a heart devoted, as I well know yours is, to the honour of God. I regret very much that the psalter is only bound in parchment; but here I could procure no other copy. I entreat Him, by whose holy inspiration these psalms were written, to grant that the mantle of Joshua may descend upon you for the deliverance of the people of these realms."*

The cabals between the partisans of the marshal de Montmorency and the admiral de Brion continued with unabated acrimony during the entire period of Marguerite's sojourn at Valence. The unlimited powers conferred upon Montmorency raised him many opponents in the council. The military abilities of the marshal were of paramount importance, at this period, to the king. The inclinations of Francis, therefore, as well as the solicitations of his sister, concurred in prompting him to suffer no curtailment of the vast powers which he had conferred on his favourite. "The king has been much angered at the opposition his council make to the powers without limitation which it is his will to bestow on you. He has commanded this affair to be disposed of as quickly as possible; for, as he observed, you can do nothing at this juncture which he will disavow; and had it not been for those under your command he would have refused to grant any written form of power at all, because you alone perfectly understand his will;"† wrote Marguerite, a few days later, to Montmorency. The queen's letters to the marshal, during her residence at Valence, are replete with allusions to the intrigues of the partisans of the admiral, and of their unavailing efforts to induce Francis to relinquish to Brion the management of the state affairs usually transacted by Montmorency.

While she was sojourning at Valence, the queen of Navarre received tidings of the approaching departure of her husband from Toulouse, with a body of four thousand Basque soldiers. Henry wrote to desire his consort to meet him at Montfrin, a little town close to Nîmes, that his troops might pass in review before her. The queen, on receiving this much-desired intelligence, took leave of her royal brother and set out for Avignon, determined to take Montmorency by surprise, by visiting his camp on the road to Montfrin.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth. No. 8530.

† Ibid, No. 8550.

The camp of the marshal de Montmorency occupied a district lying to the north-east of the town of Avignon, and situated in the angle formed by the junction of the rivers Rhone and Durance. It was constructed with admirable skill: on one side the Durance defended the camp against attack; and on the other the Rhone afforded an easy and rapid passage for unfailing supplies of provision and ammunitions. The camp was surrounded by a deep moat, twenty-four feet wide; through its centre ran a trench, into which the water of the Rhone was turned. This ditch received the drainage of the camp, which was thus kept dry and free from infection. The internal arrangements of this vast encampment were ordered with minute precision and care. Separate quarters were assigned to troops of different races. The twenty thousand Swiss mercenaries in the pay of the king were encamped together; the German lansknechts had their separate quarters; and, so far as such an arrangement became practicable, the French troops levied in the various provinces of France were kept asunder. This method answered admirably for the avoidance of tumults and brawls. The streets and squares of the camp were defended by a regular organized guard, which attended the daily audience of the general-in-chief to present its report. In the centre of the camp, upon an eminence, rose Montmorency's tent: the marshal was thus enabled to command the whole space, and to watch every movement of the multitudes around. A sunrise mass was said in the tent of the general-in-chief; afterwards Montmorency walked for some time along the open space in front of his tent, either conversing with his chief officers, redressing wrongs, or administering justice in the peculiar and summary manner for which he was renowned. Afterwards, the marshal mounted his horse, and, attended by a brilliant staff, perambulated the camp. He then dined, and afterwards held a council of war. In the afternoon he often rode to inspect the phalanx of artillery surrounding the camp, and to question the men on their expertness, and not unfrequently he put their abilities to the test, to no small alarm of the neighbourhood.*

The queen of Navarre was received with distinguished honours by Montmorency and his hosts. Marguerite took him by surprise, to the great regret of the marshal, who wished to have given the queen a solemn military reception, at the head of his army. The arrival of Marguerite and her ladies created great enthusiasm amongst the soldiery. The queen, attended by Montmorency, inspected every portion of the camp, which excited her warmest admiration. All appeared so decorous and orderly, that Marguerite might even flatter herself that the psalter she sent to the marshal was there held in boundless esteem.

The chief officers were next received by queen Marguerite, who, with gracious dignity addressed condescending words to each, with assurances of her brother's satisfaction at their gallant deportment. Marguerite's smiles were of much value to her brother: "Often," says Brantôme,† "when the king her brother had great affairs in hand, he consulted his sister, and frequently left all to her decision. This princess had great tact, and knew how to talk, making many apt speeches, and leading others to become communicative. For this reason the king placed great reliance on her, and used to say that she afforded him very signal aid." Marguerite spent a day or two at Avignon; she then took her departure for Montfrin, escorted thither with great honour by Montmorency. She was there received by the king of Navarre, at the head of his troops drawn up in battle array. The appearance of these soldiers surpassed the queen's expectations, and made her forget in the fulness of her satisfaction the solicitude which their levy had given her. "You will be satisfied with the appearance of our Gascons, monseigneur," wrote the queen to her brother; "would that the emperor might make an attempt to cross the Rhone whilst I am here! for, with the additional succour which you might send, (and we should not re quire much,) I would undertake on my life, woman as I am, to defend the passage!"*

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* Du Bellay.

† Brantôme,—Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

The queen's letter to her brother, giving an account of her visit to the camp at Avignon, from which the above passage is extracted, is far too interesting, and expressive of Marguerite's dauntless energy of character to be omitted. She wrote thus:

Queen Marguerite to Francis I.

"Montfrin.

"Monseigneur,—Although it is scarcely becoming to praise a thing of which my sex renders me incompetent to judge, I cannot refrain from writing to you, to say that all the captains and soldiers with whom I conversed assure me that never was there a better or a stronger camp constructed than that at Avignon. I could not, however, help perceiving that it is the most salubrious place, clean almost as a private cabinet, and filled with numbers of handsome men, whose countenances and words demonstrate the ardour which they feel to render you service. It is true, monseigneur, that you have given them a chief worthy to be called your lieutenant; nor do I believe that you could have selected one who bears greater resemblance to yourself than he; for to hear him even speak recalls your own discourse to mind, which tends to allay and controvert the misgivings of those whose fears surpass their wisdom. I assure you, monseigneur, that both in word and in deed he shows extreme vigilance, displaying great gentleness towards everybody, tempered by justice, order, and patience in listening to those who address themselves to him, combined with prudence in council; which virtues show that he has been trained by you. I do not say this from my own observation alone, but after having discoursed much with the captains from all nations gathered there in camp. I find that they all said this, and much more besides; moreover, they all bear him such love and obedience, that there never arises dissension, but all live together in harmony, as brothers born. Count Guillaume† requested me to write you word that there was a great difference between the shameful purgatory we submitted to in Italy and the comparative paradise which this camp now presents. He recounted to me many of the errors committed there; which I would rather he should relate to you than myself, as they are inexcusable. I thank God that it is quite the contrary here. I would not have missed inspecting this army for anything in the world; for I have such an opinion of its valour, that if the emperor had advanced against the camp during my sojourn there, I should not have stirred thence, from certainty that no harm could befall me surrounded by such an assemblage. At worst, monseigneur, I should have been too happy to die amongst so many valiant personages.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8546.

† Count Guillaume de Furstembourg.

"I will not recount to you the honourable welcome given to me by M. le grand maître, who knew nothing of my contemplated visit; nor did any of my attendants. He conducted me over your camp, with his two veteran officers, the princes, and such a retinue of distinguished persons, that never was queen Penthesilea herself received with such honour—the which, as it all proceeds from you, I now return it back. Of one thing I am certain, that the emperor will hold council for two days extra, to satisfy himself why I have been to the camp, so that it will turn out much to my profit and to his disadvantage.

"Monseigneur, I arrived here at Montfrin last night. The levies of the king of Navarre are here, and the troops have assembled in battle array for my inspection. I cannot say much in praise of the infantry; but there are few troops better mounted than this cavalry. You will be satisfied with the appearance of our Gascons. Would that the emperor might make an attempt to cross the Rhone whilst I am here! for with the additional succour which you might send (and we should not require much) I would undertake on my life, woman as I am, to defend the passage! But I do not believe that the emperor will undertake either to pass the river or to attack this camp, nor yet to assail you; for your sojourn at Valence gives him great consternation, while it confers lustre on your camp. It is a circumstance not a little glorious to you, that one of your servants can arrest the progress of the emperor, and starve his camp. If God continues thus to prosper your efforts, I hold it certain that either future victory or present peace will be at your command. Imagine, therefore, monseigneur, seeing that both your health and your affairs continue well, how thankfully and fervently I shall continue to pray for your prosperity.

"Your very humble and obedient subject and *mignonne*,

"MARGUERITE."*

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8546.

CHAPTER VII.

Marguerite visits queen Eleanor at Amboise—Progress of the campaign—Insubordination of the Gascon troops garrisoned in Arles—The war in Picardy—Alarm of the Parisians—Discipline adopted to preserve order in the capital—Arrest of Hugues de la Haye—Marguerite requests his liberation—Her correspondence on the subject with M. de la Roche—Death of the dauphin Francis—the cardinal de Lorraine breaks the sorrowful tidings of his son's decease to the king—Anguish manifested by Francis—The emperor is suspected of having procured the death of the prince by poison—Arrest of the count de Montecuculi—His trial and condemnation—Grief of queen Eleanor at the decease of the dauphin—Letter written by the queen of Navarre to Montmorency—Sufferings of the Imperial army from pestilence and famine—Retreat of the emperor from Provence—The king of Scotland lands at Dieppe—He solicits the hand of the princess Madelaine of France—Correspondence of queen Marguerite with the constable—Journey of the queen into Bretagne—Her advice on political affairs to Montmorency—The king of Scotland makes his entry into Paris—His marriage with the princess Madelaine—Epistle in verse written by the queen of Navarre to the dauphin—Marguerite departs for Alençon—The objects of her journey—Her correspondence with the king—Enlightened judgment exhibited by queen Marguerite in the choice of her ministers—Disaffection in the province of Berry—Marguerite applies to the king to send aid for its repression—Death of the duke de Vendôme—Marguerite repairs to St. Germain—Capture of the town of Hesdin—The queen's letter to her brother on the occasion—Noël Béda—His factious deportment—His arrest and trial—Embassy sent by the Swiss Cantons to implore the king to exercise clemency towards his Lutheran subjects—The ambassadors are dismissed by Montmorency—They return and appeal to queen Marguerite to procure them an audience of the king—Marguerite sends alms for the support of the exiled Lutheran ministers—Attempt made by the queen of Navarre to induce the king to favour the Reformers—The curé of St. Eustache—He preaches before the king—Effect of Le Coq's eloquence—Illness of the king of Navarre—Marguerite's sojourn at St. Cloud—The queen's correspondence with Montmorency—Marguerite departs from Béarn—Her anxiety respecting the efficient guard of the frontiers—Her letter of farewell to the king—Francis confides to his sister supreme command over the province of Guyenne—Queen Marguerite's heroism—She visits the garrison towns throughout Béarn and Gascony—Her sojourn at Dax—She visits Bordeaux—Marguerite obtains the release of André Melancthon from the parliament of Bordeaux—She prepares to visit her brother at Lyons—Marguerite's arrival at Limoges—Her interview with the count de Longueval—Madame d'Estampes—Firmness displayed by queen Marguerite in resisting the demands of the duchess—Departure of the queen from Lyons to Fontainebleau—Position of the dauphiness, Catherine de Medici—She is menaced with divorce—She seeks the protection of queen Marguerite—She petitions the king—The question of divorce is decided authoritatively by king Francis—Marguerite's sojourn at Fontainebleau—Her amusements—Triumph of the French arms in Savoy—Letter written by queen Marguerite to her brother on the occasion.

After the departure of the king of Navarre for the camp at Avignon, Marguerite quitted Montfrin, and repaired to Amboise to visit queen Eleanor, who watched the progress of the campaign with melancholy and foreboding.

In Provence the emperor had as yet made little progress. His troops defeated a detachment of soldiers under the command of Montejan and Boissy, and surprised the small town of Brignolles, in which the two officers had sheltered themselves. This skirmish the emperor magnified into a glorious victory; and he accordingly notified this engagement to all the courts of Europe, and failed not to draw attention to the fact that this was the first of the magnificent series of triumphs predicted to him.* The plan of defence so wisely adopted by the French filled Charles with consternation; he was in a wasted and almost desert country; and he knew that if the enemy persisted in refusing battle, his troops would soon suffer from extremity of famine. His foraging parties scarcely ever quitted the camp without being beaten; and the farther he advanced into the interior of Provence, the more difficult it became to transport provision landed on the coast by Andrea Doria for the support of his vast army. The armed peasantry of the districts infuriated at the losses they had sustained by the invasion, revenged themselves by committing acts of the greatest barbarity on all stragglers from the detachments sent out on foray; they attacked the escorts despatched to protect convoys of provisions from the coast, and in numerous instances captured the supplies. Often the beasts of burden, levied with incalculable exertion by the emperor's officers to transport provision from the coast, were found in the morning either hamstrung, or slaughtered by the cunning ingenuity of the enraged Provençal peasants. The hot suns, and the dearth of food soon caused infectious disorders to break out in the Imperial camp, and the troops clamoured to be led to an engagement. But well informed of the strength of Montmorency's camp, the emperor was too prudent to attack him in his intrenchments. He therefore directed his efforts for the capture of some large town near the coast, where the head-quarters of his army might be established, and which might insure him unfailing supplies of provision. But the prudent caution of Francis had provided, though at the cost of most disastrous calamity, that no such haven of refuge should present itself for the emperor and his exhausted armies. The town of Aix, the ancient capital of Provence, had been dismantled; Arles was strongly fortified, and defended by a numerous garrison provided with food and ammunition transported into the centre of the city on the Rhone. The lordly towers of Marseilles, that city so often besieged, defied the menaces of the invaders. The harbour, filled with noble vessels of war under the command of the brave Barbesieux, admiral of the fleet, held Doria in check; and poured abundance of provision into the city. The warlike Marseillais, proud of their martial renown, and treasuring the remembrance of the siege they had so gloriously sustained when Bourbon and Pescara menaced their ancient city, prepared for the most vigorous defence. The greatest unanimity prevailed in all the garrison towns of Provence and Languedoc, with the exception only of Arles, where the diversity of foreign legionaries created division and tumult. The prince of Amalfi and Bonneval were joint commanders of the garrison, which included the thousand Gascon soldiers under the count de Carmain, reviewed by queen Marguerite at Nîmes. These Gascons did not prove themselves worthy of the praise bestowed upon them by their sovereign, for a more rebellious band never spread confusion throughout the city. One day a flock of sheep chanced to pass under the walls of Arles, driven by agents of the commissaries supplying Montmorency's camp at Avignon. Four or five of these Gascon troops made a sortie from the town, and seized six of the sheep, which they had descried from the ramparts. The commissaries laid a complaint before the count de Carmain, who caused the soldiers to be arrested and sent to prison. When this measure was reported to Arzac, captain of the troop, he insolently demanded the release of the soldiers, threatening that if they were not at once sent back to their quarters, the whole company would revolt. Indignant at this menace, Bonneval dismissed Arzac from his presence, commanding him to depart himself, and to conduct the disaffected amongst his men from Arles without delay. Instead of obeying the general, Arzac rejoined his comrades, and passionately recounted the repulse he had just received. The seditious Gascons thereupon, with loud shouts, rose to arms, and perambulated the town in battle array, crying "Gascogne! Gascogne!" to incite their countrymen to join in the revolt. The count de Carmain presented himself before them, sword in hand, and attempted to recall the men to their duty: they refused to listen to him, and with threats proceeded on their tumultuous march, forcing the prisons, and sacking the Hotel de Ville and several private abodes. The following day a general assembly of the garrison was called. By a *coup-de-main*, skilfully concerted by Bonneval and the prince of Amalfi, the mutinous corps was separated and suddenly surrounded. Arzac, who was at the head of his band, was then commanded to lead forth the ringleaders of the seditious movement of the preceding day. Not daring to disobey, he indicated two soldiers, who, it was afterwards proved, were amongst the most pacifically inclined of the rebels. The culprits were instantly hung without form or process; and Arzac was again called upon by the prince to deliver up their accomplices, and to name all who had taken part in the sedition. The bold Gascon trooper was beside himself with rage at this demand. "The troop, every man of it, is guilty," exclaimed he furiously; "if you are so greedy of blood, and of the spectacle of capital punishment, erect your gibbets and hang the entire company." Upon this flagrant breach of military discipline, the troop was decreed to be worthy of disbandment. Their ensigns were declared forfeit, and Arzac received orders to proceed with the rebel troop to the camp at Avignon, where the general-in-chief would pronounce its fate. Arzac, however, who feared to encounter the fiat of the dreaded Montmorency, made his escape over the frontier; his band was broken, and some of the least guilty of its members drafted into other companies of foot.*

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* Du Bellay. Sandoval,—Hist. del Emperador Carlo V.

In Picardy, meanwhile, the Imperial troops, under the counts de Reux and de Nassau, ravaged the country, and, after seizing the town of Guise, laid siege to Peronne, a fortress defended by the brave marshal de Fleuranges. The dukes de Vendôme and de Guise offered a most valiant defence against the inroads of the Imperialists, whose menaced advance upon Paris, in case of the fall of Peronne, filled the capital with tumult and apprehension. Happily for the Parisians, their bishop, Jean du Bellay, possessed a courageous spirit, and though a Churchman, he was, in common with his two renowned brothers, endowed with great military abilities. Under his guidance the city was placed in a condition of effectual defence. The parliament voted subsidies, and the virulent faction of the universities subdued itself into reverential obedience to the ruling power. Discipline in the city was so well maintained during the invasion, that no one might quit the capital without a permit from the king's lieutenant over the province of the Isle de France. This regulation was so strictly maintained that even a poor scholar of one of the universities, named De la Haye, was detained in prison, by order of M. de la Roche, because he had sought license to leave the capital, and could assign no other motive than obedience to the command of his father. The latter happened to be a valet-de-chambre in the service of the queen of Navarre—a circumstance probably unknown to M. de la Roche. Jean de la Haye,* therefore, solicited his royal mistress to intercede in behalf of his young son, so arbitrarily deprived of liberty for attempting to obey his directions. Marguerite, therefore, wrote to explain matters to M. de la Roche. She says: "Mon cousin, the father of Hugues de la Haye has informed me how, on account of the wars, he had commanded his son to quit Paris, and retire to his home in the town of Arras; but that you, on receiving the application of the said scholar, caused him to be detained, on suspicion of his having made false representations. I pray you, therefore, mon cousin, let this poor scholar go free; for I have been informed by many worthy persons that he has been in reality studying in Paris, and that the sole cause of his intended departure thence is the war, and the obedience which he, in common with most students, render to the commands of their parents."† M. de la Roche, however, who knew how easily Marguerite's compassion was excited, and the great number of applicants perpetually petitioning for her intercession, thought it his duty, on some public ground not recorded, still to detain Hugues de la Haye. Probably the young student had taken a prominent part in the factious broils in which the Parisians relieved their excitement, before the energetic measures of their bishop were adopted. He therefore refused to release De la Haye, excusing himself from performing Marguerite's request on the plea that "the queen had been importuned to make the demand, as it was evident she had no personal knowledge of the accused." The relatives of De la Haye again appealed to the queen. Marguerite, who was little accustomed to have her wishes set aside on the ground that she knew not her own mind, addressed herself again, with greater warmth, to M. de la Roche. "Mon cousin," she wrote, "I have written to you already about the deliverance of a student, named Hugues de la

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* Du Bellay. Du Ferron.

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* Jean de la Haye was one of the most accomplished of the queen's valets-de-chambre, almost all of whom were literary men; so that Marguerite's antechamber was frequently compared to a veritable Parnassus. De la Haye published, in 1547, Marguerite's poem, "La Marguerite de la Marguerite des Princesses," a book which contains almost all the chief published poems written by his august patroness.

† MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8587.

Haye, and my servants in Paris inform me that you have received that letter. They have likewise sent me word of the good disposition which you evince to do me any pleasure, for which I thank you. Nevertheless, I am told you imagine that because I am importuned to do so, I have written in favour of the said scholar, and for this reason you delay, and hesitate to grant him deliverance. I now write to advertise you that I have only been solicited to do so by the father of the said student, who, being one of my servants, I desire to oblige. Moreover, out of the favour I bear the latter, I purpose to take the said scholar, his son, into my service likewise. For these causes, mon cousin, I request you very affectionately to restore the said De la Haye his liberty."* Probably this strong expression of Marguerite's wishes had the desired effect upon M. de la Roche, who was the brother of the marshal de Montmorency, and the poor student was suffered to retire to his home in the town of Arras.

The young dauphin Francis, meantime, had as yet taken no part in the campaign. The idol of the French people, the prince excelled in all martial exercises, and in that gallant and brilliant demeanour which ever insures popular enthusiasm. Burning to distinguish himself by some deed of military prowess worthy of the heir of the proudest monarchy in Christendom, Francis quitted Amboise, and, with a gallant retinue of knights and noblemen, sailed down the Rhone to join his father at Valence. On his way, the dauphin amused himself by hunting in the dense forests then bordering the river, and in other diversions, with the young cavaliers of his suite. At Lyons he intended to make some sojourn. One day the dauphin quitted his abode to play at tennis in a spacious racket-court lying close to the city. Feeling fatigued and heated by his exertions, he presently threw himself down on the ground, and despatched a page to draw him water at a neighbouring spring, in a cup said to impart an icy freshness to any liquid it contained, and which had recently been presented to him by Dona Inez Beatrix Pacheco, one of the Spanish ladies in queen Eleanor's suite. It is stated that while the young page was employed in raising the bucket from the well, an Italian nobleman, named Sebastian Montecuculi, who filled the office of grand cupbearer in the household of the dauphin, approached, and feigning to admire the workmanship of the vase, took it up, as it was afterwards asserted, with the atrocious design of rubbing a subtle and deadly poison on the sides of the cup. The page hastened to bear to his royal master the draught he so eagerly desired. The dauphin drained the cup, and in a few minutes was seized with excruciating pains and sickness, which continued without interval during the whole of the day.* His physicians in vain applied their remedies; the dauphin continued gradually to sink. Feeling the approach of death, the young prince caused himself to be placed in an open boat, on a couch, and rowed down the river, hoping to arrive at Valence in time to see his father, to whom he was devotedly attached. During the journey, the dauphin's sufferings were pitiable to behold. When the boat reached Tournon, his attendants, perceiving that he was speechless and nearly insensible, carried him ashore. In about two hours after his landing, the dauphin expired, at the early age of nineteen.†

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., fo. 24. Marguerite's letters are both dated from Lyons. The latter epistle bears date, Lyons, le 24ème, jour de Juillet.

The melancholy task of announcing to Francis the decease of his son devolved on the cardinal de Lorraine, who had been hastily summoned to Tournon. When the cardinal entered the king's presence, his gravity and sorrowful deportment attracted the attention of Francis, who at this perilous juncture was alive to every variation in the deportment of his attached servants. The king silently, for some minutes, fixed his eyes on the cardinal; then, as nobody spoke, though the chamber was filled with attendants, he asked whether news had been received that morning of the approach of the dauphin. The cardinal replied, that intelligence had reached the camp of the dangerous illness of the prince, who had been compelled to land at Tournon. The deep distress manifested by the cardinal as he announced these tidings, and the tears which suffused the eyes of all present, admonished the king that some more lamentable catastrophe was concealed from him. "I comprehend!" suddenly ejaculated Francis, rising from his chair in great agitation, "you, none of you have courage to tell me that my son is already dead; you would soften the blow by telling me of his dangerous illness."* Finding his apprehensions confirmed by the silence of the cardinal, the king covered his face with his mantle and retired to the window at the end of the apartment. All the courtiers then withdrew to the antechamber of the royal apartment, excepting the cardinal de Lorraine. Presently the king motioned for the prelate to approach, and in a voice hoarse with emotion, asked to be informed of every particular relative to his son's decease. Francis listened in silence; but when the cardinal concluded his narrative, he exclaimed, in the fervour of his grief: "My God, I know that it is reasonable for me patiently to endure afflictions which proceed from Thee; but unless Thou dost bestow upon me constancy and courage, how can I support this bitter trial? Already Thou hast chastened and afflicted me by the defeat of my armies, and Thou hast now added over and above this calamity of the loss of my son! What now remains but that Thou shouldest wrest from me my all? If such be Thy holy will, teach me, Lord, to bow to Thy decrees; for by Thy Almighty aid and power can I alone find strength to submit to Thy chastisements, and to overcome the rebellious murmurs of the flesh!"† Francis then retired to give free course to his grief in private, and appeared no more in public during that day, causing all necessary instructions to be issued by the cardinal de Lorraine.

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* De Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France. Vie du Dauphin, François de France.

† Ibid,—Eloges des Enfans de France. Du Bellay.

The following morning the king met his council with stern composure; the facts of the sudden decease of the dauphin were examined and discussed; and whether a sentiment of intense hatred against the emperor pervaded the minds of all its members, or that in reality the evidence adduced implicated Charles, it was declared that the dauphin died from the effects of a subtle poison administered to him at the instigation of the emperor by the count Sebastian Montecuculi.

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* Du Bellay. De Coste.

† Du Bellay.

Francis prepared to avenge his son's death with implacable severity; Montecuculi had been arrested by command of the cardinal de Lorraine, and orders were transmitted to Lyons to subject him to torture, in order to extort a confession. At one period of his life Montecuculi had been page of honour to the emperor Charles; he afterwards quitted the service of the emperor to enter that of Catherine de Medici, and he attended this princess into France on her marriage with the duke of Orleans. While stretched on the rack, the unfortunate Montecuculi confessed to the crime; though it is said he afterwards protested that the extremity of the torment to which he was subjected extorted his admission. He implicated the Imperial generals de Leyva and Gongaza, deposing that the latter had recently presented him to the emperor, who questioned him minutely as to the domestic habits of the king and his sons, and that after this audience Antonio de Leyva secretly commissioned him to poison them all as opportunity presented.* It was also reported that about the same period Don Lopez de Sora, Imperial ambassador to the Venetian republic, was heard publicly to inquire who would become the sovereign of France in the event of the death of the king and of his three sons.

The personal enmity subsisting between the emperor and the king of France, always demonstrated with such unrestrained bitterness, gave importance to a rumour which probably of itself would soon have become extinct. Charles, however crafty and unscrupulous in his political career, could not, it is to be believed, have been guilty of so atrocious a crime; his history besides affords no parallel case of his having connived at the sin of secret assassination. In this instance, likewise, no private or political interest could be served by compassing the death of the young dauphin; the king had two other sons to succeed on his death to the crown of France, a realm upon which the emperor had no pretensions; while if Charles's motive had been to deliver himself from the claim of the House of Orleans over the Duchy of Milan, the daughters of Francis possessed undoubted pretension to the heritage of Valentina Visconti; or in default of these princesses, the princes of the House of Ferrara, succeeded in right of their mother Renée, sister of queen Claude, and younger daughter of Louis XII.

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* Dupleix,—Hist. Générale de France. Belleforest,—Hist. de France.

The emperor indignantly repelled the odious suspicion, and declared, with vehement energy, "that on his oath, and most solemn protestation, he had never even in thought compassed a deed of such abominable iniquity; for that he would rather lose dignity, riches, and empire, than blast his reputation by even devising an act so unworthy a prince of his quality." He added moreover, "that it was the height of folly to assert that the dauphin died by poison; for any person maturely weighing the circumstances attending his decease, would not fail to perceive that the death of the prince was occasioned by drinking cold water while heated and weary, which had fatally weakened a constitution destroyed by early habits of profligacy."* The statements of some authors agree with the assertions of the emperor; they declare that the dauphin's malady was an attack of pleurisy, brought on by drinking cold water while heated. The unfortunate Montecuculi, meanwhile, was tried for the crime, and condemned to death. A small packet of arsenic was found in his possession, which confirmed public belief in his guilt. The king, attended by his princes and nobles, was present at the condemnation of the count, who implicated Guillaume d'Dinteville, Seigneur Deschenets in the crime, by confessing that he had confided his project when at Turin to that noble. The arrest of Deschenets followed as a matter of course; but his innocence being satisfactorily proved, he was released. The sentence of the court declared "the count Sebastian de Montecuculi guilty of having poisoned the late dauphin Francis, duke of Viennois and Bretagne, eldest son of the king, by administering to him arsenic in a cup, modelled of clay; furthermore, the said count is convicted of having returned to France with the intent of poisoning the king also: for which crimes the court condemns the criminal to be drawn on a hurdle from the prisons of Rouenne to the church of St. John, where, clad in a shirt, with bare head and feet, and holding a lighted torch, he shall implore pardon of God and the king;

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* Belleforest,—Hist. Gén. de France.

from thence he shall be drawn on the same hurdle to the Place de Granelle, where in his presence, the poisons of arsenic and realgal seized amongst the effects of the prisoner, together with the earthen vase, shall be publicly burned. Afterwards the judgment of the court is, that the criminal shall be torn in pieces by horses; the quarters of his body to be finally suspended over the principal gates of the city of Lyons, and his head severed, and affixed over the bridge across the Rhone."*

This dreadful sentence was literally executed; and the count de Montecuculi thus expiated his crime, after having suffered frightful torments by the rack while in prison. The opinion prevailed unanimously in France and elsewhere, that the dauphin died by poison, administered by Montecuculi; but whether at the instigation of Charles, or of his council, must always remain one of those historical mysteries which none can solve. Some historians insist that the count had no accomplices in his murderous deed; but that he assassinated the young prince from motives of private revenge.

In justice to Francis, and to his nobles, judges, and prelates, it cannot be supposed that Montecuculi suffered—after his solemn trial before all that was most illustrious in France—without just and conclusive evidence of his guilt. The arsenic found amongst his effects, in an age when its deadly properties had been alone discovered, afforded strong presumptive evidence of the count's criminality. It should be observed, however, that the king, as well as the majority of his council believed that Montecuculi was an agent in the pay of the emperor; and that Charles had connived at the crime bewailed by all classes in the kingdom. Such was also the firm belief of the queen of Navarre. Marguerite does not hesitate to express her suspicions on the subject; and more than once she reverts to the fact as the most atrocious of all the wrongs committed by the emperor, in that correspondence which when penned was intended for no other eye than that of her brother. Yet if Francis felt thoroughly convinced that the emperor was the cowardly assassin of his eldest son, it appears inconsistent and incomprehensible, how, after the lapse of some three years, the king could receive Charles in his kingdom, and lavish upon him distinguished honours. The Imperialists failed not to retaliate the charge of assassination on the French themselves, by accusing the young duchess of Orleans, Catherine de Medici, of having poisoned her brother-in-law; a deed, as the partisans of Charles observed, by which the reversion of the crown of France was secured to herself, as her husband the duke of Orleans became dauphin, while the emperor's interests were not affected by the event.

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* Procès Criminel faict a l'encontre du Comte Sebastian de Montecuculo. De Coste, Eloges des Enfans de France.

The position of queen Eleanor, meanwhile, was one of profound affliction. Every complaint, which the king had to prefer against the emperor, seemed to alienate him more and more from his consort; and the frightful suspicion prevalent throughout the kingdom against her brother, overwhelmed the queen with terror. Eleanor was likewise much attached to the dauphin, whose endearing qualities, and the grateful remembrance he always evinced for her kindness during his captivity in Spain, had engaged the queen's regard. Fortunately for Eleanor, the queen of Navarre was at Amboise, when intelligence of the catastrophe reached the court. Marguerite was overwhelmed with distress and horror. That the gay, chivalrous young prince, so full of life, energy, and animation, when he departed from Amboise to join the camp, should be now prostrate by the hand of death, was an event too startling and terrible almost to be realized. The marshal de Montmorency despatched a messenger to carry the sad intelligence to the two queens at Amboise. The few brief and hurried lines which Marguerite sent back in return, testify the anguish and consternation which possessed her.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO THE MARSHAL DE MONTMORENCY.

"The treasurer of Normandy brought your letter to me here, in this castle of Amboise, from whence I write my answer, and send you an emblem of our distress, which is insufficient, however, to express its intensity. But the messenger who will deliver this letter to you, can explain our condition better than myself; for I cannot recover from the consternation which his intelligence has excited. He will therefore give you a description of our state; for I cannot even think. Also, mon nepveu, he will recount the deep affliction in which the queen is plunged, and the alarm it has occasioned us to see her sufferings, added to the grief this place now inspires to all; for not one of us can think of Amboise as Amboise, but only as a spot consecrated by the most cruel and mournful associations.[*] I pray God, mon cousin, to give you glory and prosperity, in the same proportion as I have received tribulation and anxiety since I took up my abode here.

"Vostre bonne tante et amye,

"MARGUERITE."[†]

In Provence, meanwhile, the Imperial army endured the extremity of famine and pestilence. Parched with thirst from the excessive heat of the sun, the troops threw themselves eagerly on the vineyards, to cull the delicious clusters of grapes just then ripening, and which had been preserved from the general devastation by the command of the wary Montmorency. The result answered his expectations; the most disastrous maladies broke out in the camp; and in the space of a few weeks the Imperial army was reduced in numbers to 25,000 men. Marseilles, nevertheless, was menaced by the emperor. Charles, in his zeal to humble the bold and valiant Marseillais, himself joined the party he had sent under marquis del Guasto to reconnoitre. The garrison, ever vigilant and on the alert, descried the small detachment hovering round the city, and opened a brisk fire from the ramparts. The emperor had only time to shelter himself amongst the ruins of a house close at hand, before a troop of cavalry issued from the gates of Marseilles, sent out in pursuit. The marquis del Guasto, not daring to lead the fray to the vicinity of the spot where his Imperial master had sought shelter, effected a hurried retreat towards the camp across by-paths, to draw the enemy from the neighbourhood of the ruins. The stratagem succeeded; the neighing of the horses of the detachment, and the bright flashing of the armour worn by the Imperialists under the rays of a Provençal sun, betrayed the route del Guasto had taken. The pursuers therefore followed with eager speed, while Charles was left to his own reflections, close under the ramparts of Marseilles.

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[*] The dauphin Francis was born at Amboise, in 1518. The ceremonial of his baptism was likewise performed in the chapel of the castle.

[†] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8549.

After evading the pursuit by the rapidity of his retreat, del Guasto returned at the head of a fresh and a stronger detachment to deliver the emperor from his perilous position. This second detachment was again descried by the vigilant sentinels on the ramparts at Marseilles; and their cannon poured forth another murderous volley, which killed several persons of the personal suite of the emperor. The most vivid alarm, meantime, pervaded the Imperial camp; the army was drawn out, ready to march to the rescue of the emperor. Every officer was at his post; and the duke of Alba, at the head of a strong platoon of infantry, advanced to reinforce del Guasto's detachment. These troops met Charles in rapid flight before a body of the enemy's cavalry; and closing round the emperor, they safely escorted him to the camp at Aix, where he was received with acclamations by the soldiery.*

The death of Antonio de Leyva increased the depression reigning throughout the Imperial army; daily one or more of Charles's most famous officers fell victims to the contagious maladies raging in the camp. No possibility existed of moving the army from the pestilential atmosphere of Provence to a land of greater plenty, without forcing Montmorency's camp at Avignon, where Francis had now arrived to take the supreme command, with a further reinforcement of 20,000 Swiss troops. Disastrous news likewise reached the Imperial camp of a fresh invasion of the kingdom of Hungary by Soliman II.; while the Turkish admiral, Barberoussa, accomplished a successful descent in Apulia. Menaced and baffled on all sides, Charles at length reluctantly resolved on a retreat from France. The emperor commenced his march back into Savoy about the 10th of September. Unequal to the fatigue of so long and wearisome a progress, his soldiers dropped by hundreds on the roads, or fell into the hands of the peasantry, who put them to death with savage exultation; some expired under the weight of their armour; others, maddened by privation, and unable longer to support this accumulation of disasters, terminated their lives by suicide. Two thousand men died on the road between Aix and Fréjus alone; and their dead bodies formed so appalling a spectacle as to inspire beholders with terror and loathing.* The foliage itself seemed to droop beneath the pestilential exhalations which soon swept with desolating ravage over the fields and vineyards of Provence. Not a blade of grass sprang up, but which seemed to wither prematurely; the rivers and the brooks were infected, and imparted maladies to all who drank of their impure waters.

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* Du Bellay.

The hardships to which the Imperial army was exposed during its retreat through Provence increased in a tenfold degree on the passage across the Alps. The peasants gathered together on the heights and hurled down missiles on the discomforted soldiery; they blocked up the passes, and broke down the bridges, so that Charles was compelled to be preceded by a train of pioneers to render a passage across the swollen mountain torrents possible for the remnant of his army. The rear of the Imperial army was harassed by the attack of a powerful detachment of French cavalry under the joint command of Martin du Bellay and the count de Tende, which, every time the troops were compelled to halt by the obstacles opposing their progress, threatened to terminate in a general *mêlée.* Whilst the soldiery were engaged in repelling these attacks, mounted bands of peasants captured the camp equipages, the baggage waggons, and slaughtered the beasts of burden; pillaging and destroying by fire or sword every object within their reach.†

Charles arrived at Genoa about the commencement of the month of October: he remained there a fortnight to recruit his health, and then embarked on board his galleys for Spain. At sea he was assailed by a furious tempest, which sunk six of his galleys and two large vessels of war, having on board a stud of horses, and several chests containing the Imperial buffet of plate. The news of the critical state of affairs in France meantime reached the ears of the young and gallant James V., king of Scotland; who, remembering the ancient ties of alliance between the two crowns, and perhaps desiring also to visit his betrothed bride, Marie de Vendôme, embarked unsolicited with fifteen thousand men to aid Francis in repelling the invader of his kingdom. Unfortunately for James's chivalrous intentions, contrary winds retarded his arrival in France until after the retreat of the emperor. On his landing at Dieppe, the king of Scotland was received with distinguished honour; and Francis despatched several noblemen of his suite to welcome his young and enthusiastic ally, and to request him in the king's name to travel post to Lyons, where Francis was sojourning, leaving his baggage and attendants to follow.* James assented, and joined Francis at a place called La Chappelle, near Lyons, one day just as the king was about to sit down to dinner. The two monarchs cordially embraced; and after conversing for some time, the king of Scotland unfolded a desire which had long been paramount to every other in his heart, and prayed king Francis to annul his engagement with the daughter of the duke de Vendôme, whose health was indifferent, and to bestow upon him instead his own eldest daughter, the princess Madelaine. Francis made many objections to the proposal: in the first place the duke de Vendôme had long considered his daughter's marriage with the king of Scotland certain, and after the gallant deportment of the duke, and his loyal defence of Picardy, the king was unwilling to disappoint his hope of alliance with the royal House of Stuart. The second consideration was one of still greater weight with Francis, entailing, as it did, a conviction of the grave displeasure which "his good brother and perpetual ally," the king of England, would feel on hearing of the alliance of one of the royal daughters of France with James V. Francis, therefore, delayed giving a final answer to the importunities of the king until after James should have seen the princess Madelaine.†

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* Du Bellay. † Ibid.

With this response the king of Scotland was fain, for the time, to be content; but his suit was so urgent that Francis at length conducted him to Amboise, where Madelaine and her sister were sojourning with queen Eleanor. The charms of the pensive and delicate Madelaine completely fascinated the heart of her royal suitor, whose aversion to his betrothed increased in proportion to his admiration of her rival. Marguerite gave her warm support to the suit of the king of Scotland, whose gallantry in marching for the defence of her brother's dominions, she contrasted with the cold and selfish indifference displayed by Henry VIII. "I am wonderfully pleased with the gallant action performed by the king of Scotland; it will serve to rebuke the ingratitude displayed by his uncle (Henry VIII). The king of Scotland merits indeed a warm welcome in this realm, as you and the king doubtless will find opportunity of affording him,"[*] wrote the queen of Navarre to the marshal de Montmorency. From Amboïse the two kings, with queen Eleanor, proceeded to Blois; where after much deliberation the ceremony of betrothment between James V. and Madelaine was performed with the assent, apparently, of the duke de Vendôme.[†] The health of the princess Madelaine, like that of her royal cousin, Marie de Vendôme, was delicate and precarious. Both exhibited decided symptoms of pulmonary complaints; the beauty of Madelaine, however, was heightened by the silent inroads of the disease to which she was subject; while sickness, in the case of Mademoiselle de Vendôme, despoiled her of the few personal charms she ever possessed, and added gloom to her naturally sedate and reserved deportment. After the rupture of her engagement with the king of Scotland, Mademoiselle de Vendôme almost entirely withdrew from court; and a sense of the indignity offered to her, preying on a constitution already seriously impaired, confirmed her malady, under which she eventually succumbed at the castle of La Fère, September 28, 1538.[‡]

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* Du Bellay.

† Ibid.

At the period of the betrothment of her niece to the king of Navarre, Marguerite was again the guest of the count de Châteaubriand in Bretagne. It does not appear what the errand was which induced the queen to take so long a journey during the winter season; though we may be certain it was upon some affair connected with the internal administration of that province of great moment to the king. The count de Châteaubriand, governor of Bretagne, suffered, at this period, much solicitude from the disaffection of the garrison of the important seaport of Brest; which, being under the jurisdiction of Brion, as admiral of France, was not subject in many things to his authority. It appears that, owing to Brion's inattention, the lieutenant commanding in Brest and his soldiers were not paid punctually, so that they all manifested great lukewarmness for the royal service. "At the request of M. de Châteaubriand, I am writing to complain of this to the king; as in a matter of such importance, the governor of the province ought to have jurisdiction given to him, for the place cannot be too strictly watched,"* wrote Marguerite to Montmorency, who, doubtless, warmly supported the queen's remonstrances, as the culprit whose neglect she censured, was his rival, Brion. In another letter written during her sojourn in Bretagne to the marshal de Montmorency, Marguerite, always solicitous for her brother's affairs, warns the marshal of the probable effect which the marriage of the princess Madelaine with James V. would have on the relations between France and England. "Our affairs at the present moment," wrote Marguerite,† "are in a fair way to prosper greatly, or to be in a worse condition than they ever were. The gallant deed of the king of Scotland in coming to this kingdom, thereby showing so much confidence in the king, will certainly engender great envy and suspicion in the mind of the English king; on the other hand, the loss which the emperor has sustained, and the disgrace of his retreat, which we know he feels acutely, will animate him to seek every method to avenge himself, even to making him pretend cordial love for his enemies. Should these two monarchs agree, France will be long ere she may lay down her arms. Therefore, mon nepveu, it appears to me that if we ever needed peace it is especially at this juncture; and it will redound more to the honour of the king's moderation than it ever before did. I pray you, mon nepveu, for these reasons, and many others which I could adduce, do all in your power to accomplish a suspension of arms; for if we obtain it not, we shall find that war will soon reduce this kingdom to great straits, even as we begin already to experience. May God inspire and prosper the good-will which I know already possesses you to accomplish this end." Later, indeed, Marguerite's misgivings were justified; both Charles and Francis carried their resentments to a height ruinous to their respective subjects, and the prosperity of their kingdoms. Montmorency was pursuing the war in Picardy when Marguerite's admonitions reached him. The young dauphin Henry was making great progress in arms under his instructions; and the most valiant of the nobles hastened to range themselves under the banners of a chieftain so favoured by the king, and renowned for the admirable skill with which he had repulsed the invaders. Marguerite being aware of the impetuous ardour too often displayed by her countrymen, dreaded lest some act of aggression on the part of the brave young nobles under Montmorency's command might call back the tide of war upon the dominions of her brother, and therefore, with prudent forethought, she tried to impress upon the marshal the urgent need of forbearance, which might eventually conduce to a suspension of hostilities.

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[*] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8550.

[†] Mém. de Du Bellay.

[‡] Anselme,—Hist. Généalog. de la Maison Royale de France. Marie de Vendôme was born at the castle of La Fère, October 29, 1515. She was interred in the abbey church of Nôtre Dame de Soissons. The princess spent the last years of her life in the convent of Mont Calvaire, in the town of La Fère, though without taking the veil.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8550.

† Ibid, 9127.

The queen of Navarre returned to Paris in time to be present at the nuptial ceremony of her niece with the king of Scotland. The honour of a triumphal entry into Paris was bestowed upon James, by order of the king. This command being somewhat at variance with the ancient privilege which excused the parliament of Paris from marching in procession arrayed in their scarlet robes, before any other sovereign than their own, a deputation of members waited upon the king to inquire his pleasure upon the subject. Francis was sojourning at Fontainebleau on his road from Blois to Paris. He received the remonstrances of his parliament with courteous deference; but after the members had pointed out the inconvenience such a precedent might afford at no very distant day, the king replied, "that the reason which induced him to depart from the ancient custom was, that the king of Scotland had come in person to demand the hand of Madame

Madelaine, which he had granted to him; besides, over and above this matrimonial alliance about to unite them, the Scottish king had demeaned himself with such noble chivalry and loyal affection, that he deserved to be honoured more than any other prince whatever, who merely passed through the kingdom."*

On Sunday, the last day of December, 1536, the parliament assembled at the Palais, the members appearing arrayed in their gorgeous robes; and from thence they marched in procession to the abbey of Saint Antoine des Champs, where the king of Scotland awaited them. The first president, Lizet, pronounced an extempore harangue which was much applauded by the bystanders. At its conclusion, James cordially embraced the presidents, but made no reply, because he understood little of the French language. He then mounted his horse, and accompanied by a numerous suite of noblemen, and preceded by the parliament, king James made his solemn entry into Paris, amid the plaudits of the people, and repaired to Nôtre Dame, where a Te Deum was chanted.†

The following morning, the cardinal du Bellay, bishop of Paris, performed the marriage ceremony between Madelaine and the king of Scotland, in the church of Nôtre Dame, in the presence of the king and the queen, the queen of Navarre, the princess Marguerite, and a numerous court. The wedding banquet was holden in the evening, in the great hall of the episcopal palace, which had so recently echoed to the fiery denunciation of Francis against heresy and its upholders.‡ The dauphin was not present at his sister's marriage, for his military ardour and the unhealthiness of the season had brought on an attack of fever which confined him to the camp in Picardy. Marguerite wrote to her nephew an epistle in verse to condole with him upon his disappointment, and to express the sorrow which she felt at his absence. She commenced her letter thus:—

"Tant plus je voy le temps se resjouir
Auquel s'attend de son désir jouir
Le Roy d'Escosse en prenant vostre seur,
Et plus je suis, monsieur, soyés en seur,

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid.

En grant ennuy que vous n'estes present
Quant d'elle et luy se fera le present;
Tant plus je voy les joyes redoublées,
Comme l'on doibt, en telles assemblées,
Et plus en moy sens redoubler la payne
Dont ceste feste est de vous si loingtaine,
Ayant grant peur, qu'en cest esloignement
Vous ne soyés guéry entièrement.
C'est bien assés de ne vous pouvoir veoir,
En ce lieu cy, sans vostre mal sçavoir.
Helas! c'est trop de perdre la présence
Sans seureté de la convalescence![*]"

After the festivities given by the king on the marriage of his daughter with James V. concluded, Marguerite took leave of the court, and journeyed to Alençon, to administer some important matters relative to the government of the duchy. The king of Navarre remained with Montmorency in Picardy, and Marguerite seems to have journeyed to Alençon attended only by her ladies, and some few officers of her suite.

The prosperity of the duchy of Alençon afforded peculiar solicitude to Marguerite. The king had granted her its administration and revenues for life; and it was her great ambition to leave the income of the duchy augmented, and to remedy several abuses that had imperceptibly grown into evils of great magnitude, and which impaired the ducal authority. The litigation between the heirs of the duke d'Alençon still continued, and occasioned great discord in the duchy between the partisans of the various claimants. Soon after her arrival at Alençon, Marguerite writes with great warmth to the king on the affair which had occasioned her visit. This was a suit which had recently been decided by the courts of the duchy in favour of the plaintiffs, two young men who are nameless, against the king, a decision that in some way affected the disposal of lands claimed by Francis as part of the fief of Alençon, but which the heirs of duke Charles maintained were acquired by purchase, either by the late duke, or by his ancestors, and, as such, ought to be held hereditable. This suit occasioned Marguerite great vexa-

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[†] Epistre de la Royne de Navarre, à Henry Daulphin. F. de Béth, No. 7677. This epistle is published by M. Génin, "Lettres de Marguerite d'Angoulême."

tion; and her desire to promote the interests of the crown rendered her for the time very unpopular with the adverse party. The king, with his usual impetuosity, on being informed of the decision given by the judges of the exchequer court of Alençon, despatched commissioners into the duchy without previously informing his sister of his intentions, with orders to examine into and annul the trial, and report upon it to the council, instead of to the queen. Upon this a rumour was circulated by Marguerite's opponents that the commissioners had been sent by the king, not so much for the purpose of annulling the process, as to examine into the queen's administration of the duchy since the decease of duke Charles. Such a report offended Marguerite greatly; besides, she perceived that her authority over the duchy was thereby impaired. She was therefore advised, probably by her chancellor Olivier, to act with decision, so as at once to give a public refutation of the report. Marguerite accordingly declared that the royal commissioners had been sent by the king at her solicitation; and summoning them to her presence, she directed them first to submit to her their report on the suit decided by the courts of the duchy. Her next proceeding was to write to the king, requesting him to send a public confirmation and sanction of her proceedings. Marguerite was evidently greatly offended at the slight put upon her by the privy council: her letter expresses the highest dissatisfaction and reproach. "The chief reason which prompts me now to write to you, monseigneur, is to beg that you will never more sanction such proceedings, without first advertising me of your intentions; for I can assure you, that without my intervention you would have lost revenue to the amount of 10,000 livres annually. Nevertheless, monseigneur, I have now so ordered in this matter, that you will be obeyed without personal loss or risk, though had you previously communicated to me your wishes, the transaction might have been conducted in a more honourable manner. Feeling confident, however, that such were your intentions towards me, I have publicly declared that the commissioners were despatched by you at my request; and I entreat you, monseigneur, if it be only for your own interest, not to delay in sending confirmation of my assertion."* After the devotion she had manifested for her brother's interests, it might well raise Marguerite's indignation to find herself treated with such little consideration in an affair so trivial. In the council there always existed a strong party, headed by the admiral de Brion, opposed to Marguerite's influence; and ever ready, when opportunity occurred, to check her designs, and to sow dissension between the king and herself. Jealous of the queen's favour, Montmorency often gave his secret support to Marguerite's enemies, when he could do so without risk of detection. Influenced more than he would have been willing to admit by his stern and bigoted consort, Madelaine de Savoye, the marshal believed that he was performing a meritorious act in sacrificing his ancient friendship for the queen of Navarre, to his horror at her alleged apostacy from the Roman Church. The slight offered to Marguerite in the affair of the royal commissioners was doubtless devised by the admiral as a species of retaliation for the queen's complaints of his maleadministration at the port of Brest, and Francis, in the hurry occasioned by more important matters, probably signed the decree without due regard to its import.

The letter addressed to him by the queen reached Francis while he was sojourning in Picardy, at the head-quarters of the Marshal de Montmorency. The king appears to have been surprised and indignant at the insult offered to his sister: he forthwith despatched a messenger to Alençon, with letters subjecting the commissioners in all matters to Marguerite's authority; and giving strict directions that they should undertake nothing without her previous concurrence. Francis also sent powers to the queen to annul or to execute the decrees promulgated by his commissioners as she deemed expedient; and he also forwarded to her copies of the letters he addressed to them. Marguerite's joy was extreme on receiving this fresh confirmation of her brother's unshaken confidence and love. "Monseigneur," wrote she,† "I have received the letter which you have been graciously pleased to address to your commissioners here at Alençon, in the which you have commanded them to lay before me their judgments, that I may execute the decrees in the manner I deem expedient and necessary. I believe, monseigneur, that in so decreeing, it was your intention to show me great favour; but I assure you what you have done confers so infinite a benefit that I cannot express its magnitude by writing. First, you have given refutation to a rumour in circulation that these commissioners were sent by you to make inquiry into all my acts since I undertook, twelve years ago, the administration of this duchy; secondly, you have prostrated the pride of those who, after they had done all in their power to injure you, boasted of their supposed triumph over me, who held them during your captivity in such wholesome subjection. You have, moreover, convinced those persons of their error, who believed that my actions were regarded with such suspicion by you, that you would neither trust me more, nor any hitherto concerned in the administration of the duchy." These tedious disputes between the crown and the heirs of Alençon, continued throughout Marguerite's life to harass her administration of the duchy. Henry II. at length brought the matter to a final settlement, though not without great difficulty.

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* Bib. Roy. F. du Suppl. Fran. MS. 29.

† Ibid, No. 13.

In the appointment of the public officers and magistrates of the duchies subject to her jurisdiction, Marguerite evinced an enlightened judgment. With few exceptions, the men selected by the queen to fill the most important posts at her disposal, rose to the highest eminence in the state: merit was the only passport to Marguerite's favour; and talent, however humble the individual might be possessing it, she fostered and rewarded. Sainte Marthe, in his eulogium on the queen of Navarre, enumerates the names of the ministers whom she successively selected to carry on the administration of the duchy of Alençon, as they severally passed from her service into that of the king. "If Brion were now living, that grave and prudent magistrate, he would bear testimony of the wisdom I have been commemorating," exclaimed the orator, with fervid enthusiasm.* "When Brinon died he was succeeded by François Olivier, as chancellor of this duchy, who adorned that office by his admirable virtue, and so greatly augmented the excellent dignity of chancellor that (as one worthy of still greater honour) by the will of Providence we have seen him raised to the height of glory and distinction.* Groslot succeeded Olivier; a man of enlightened mind, experienced in all honourable matters, of mature judgment, and worthy to be honoured for his profound erudition. Of Habbot, now counsellor of the king, whom queen Marguerite created president of the municipal council of this town, you know, O Alençonnois, what tribute we owe to him: and you will doubtless agree with the members of the high court at Paris, that in Habbot a firm spirit of justice and rectitude is tempered and united with a humane and gentle disposition, liveliness of wit, and everything which might be lauded in a man of perfect parts. I must not overlook or refrain from the mention of three other illustrious personages—Antoine du Lyon, Jehan Prevost, and François Boilleau, also senators of parliament, and counsellors chosen by Marguerite to minister in her Court of Exchequer. But time would fail me to recapitulate the names and titles of the bishops, abbés, and senators whom Marguerite retained in her household, or provided with offices; but all of them were men of excellent learning and wisdom."

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* Sainte Marthe. Oraison Funèbre de l'Incomparable Marguerite.

Marguerite devoted much attention to the affairs of the duchy of Berry, though she did not feel an equal interest in the administration of that province. The university of Bourges, indeed, absorbed much of her attention, as the queen nominated to the vacant professorships, and otherwise enjoyed extensive patronage. While she was sojourning at Alençon, news reached Marguerite that several mutinous assemblies of disaffected persons had been holden within the limits of Berry. Her indignation at these factious proceedings was especially kindled when she was, informed that language highly seditious and offensive had been used during these assemblies relative to the conduct of Francis; and that a spirit of disloyalty was making rapid progress throughout the duchy, through the mischievous intervention of these persons, who wandered about in bands, holding treasonable harangues in the villages through which they passed. In the midst of her engagements, and the vigilant attention which she gave to the proceedings of the royal commissioners at Alençon, Marguerite found leisure to write to her brother to ask for the repression of this evil also. She requests him to issue a commission under the great seal, addressed to the lieutenant-governor of Berry, M. de Lignières, empowering that officer to levy the *arrière ban* throughout the province, effectually to put to flight the malcontents, and to arrest the ringleaders. "Then, monseigneur," continues Marguerite, with energetic decision, "I will send Jenton to examine the prisoners thus arrested, and to inquire into the causes, *qui leur fait crier vive aultre que vous!*"[*] Marguerite then informs her brother that she was about to quit Alençon to visit the duke de Vendôme, who was lying dangerously ill at Amiens, of fever. The duke's malady unfortunately proved fatal.[†] Marguerite greatly regretted his death, as she always lived on terms of the warmest friendship both with the duke de Vendôme and with his consort. The king of Navarre joined Marguerite at Amiens, where she remained until the end of the month of April, actively engaged with her brother's affairs, and in offering consolation to the widowed duchess de Vendôme. Accompanied by her husband, Marguerite, after paying a brief visit to the king at the camp at Piquigny, proceeded to St. Germain, to take leave of queen Eleanor before her departure for Béarn, where the affairs of his principality urgently demanded Henry's presence.

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* François Olivier de Leuville was created chancellor of France by the recommendation of queen Marguerite, in 1544. His rare integrity and virtues merit the highest eulogium.

The news of the capture of the town of Hesdin reached the court during Marguerite's residence at St. Germain. This intelligence inspired the princesses with transports of joy; and Marguerite, to whom Eleanor deferred in all things, was commissioned by the queen and the dauphiness to employ her ready pen in congratulating the king on the success of his arms. The queen wrote in her most enthusiastic strain a joint letter, as follows:—

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[*] Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl., Fran. MS., No. 40.

[†] The duke de Vendôme died of fever at Amiens, March, 1537.—Du Bellay.

Queen Marguerite to Francis I.[*]

"Monseigneur,—The indescribable joy which we feel deprives us almost of strength to write to you; for although we had firm hope that Hesdin would be captured, yet there remained so great a dread of everything possible and impossible which might befall you, that since Monday last we have been little better than dead from our fears. This morning we have all revived at the wonderful intelligence which your messenger brought; and after running each of us into the apartments of the other, to announce the good news rather by joyous tears than by speech, we have all assembled here with the queen, in order to return thanks to Him who always shows you such signal favour. I assure you, monseigneur, that the queen cordially embraced the bearer of this happy news; and, moreover, she has conferred the same favour on those who participate in her joy; so that we all scarcely know what we are doing, or the words we write to you. You will be pleased, therefore, to excuse us if we feel so transported at the thought of the satisfaction which we know that you are feeling. Monseigneur, as we cannot sufficiently recompense the bearer of the good tidings you sent us, we beseech you to hold him in remembrance, and to bestow upon him liberal maintenance: we all of us desire to unite in this deed; though should he become the fortunate recipient of your bounty, he will not need further aid.

"In conclusion, monseigneur, the queen commands me to beseech you—a request in which all the ladies of her court unite—to permit us to meet you at any place you may appoint; for like St. Thomas we shall remain incredulous, until with our own eyes we have looked upon our king, safe and restored to us from his happy victory. Fervently is this grace supplicated for by

"Your very humble and very obedient subjects,

"Caterine,[†] Marguerite,[‡] Marguerite,[§]
"Marguerite,[||] Anne."[¶]

After the capture of the town of Hesdin, the military ardour of the king abated, and wearied with the monotony of the camp at Pernes, he set out on his return to the capital, accompanied by the dauphin and by Montmorency. The intelligence of fresh hostilities on the part of the Imperialists on the frontiers compelled the marshal however to return to resume his command, which he retained until a truce of ten months was concluded at the village of Bomy, July 31, 1537, by the mediation of queen Eleanor and her sister Mary, regent of the Netherlands.

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[*] Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl., Fran., MS. No. 104.

[†] Catherine de Medici, the dauphiness.

[‡] Marguerite, second daughter of the king.

[§] The queen of Navarre.

[||] Marguerite, daughter of Charles, duke de Vendôme. She married the duke de Nevers, 1538.

[¶] Anne de Pisseleu, duchess d'Estampes.

The return of the king delayed the journey of the king and queen of Navarre into Béarn. The war in Artois and Flanders, consisting but in a succession of sieges and forays across the frontiers on the part of the French and the Imperialists, the king had leisure to devote his attention to the internal administration of his kingdom. The religious cabals in Paris had somewhat decreased since the summary measure adopted by the king in regard to the turbulent syndic of the Sorbonne. In the midst of the panic occasioned by the approaching invasion, and just before the Imperial army crossed the frontiers, Noël Béda returned to Paris. His first exploit was to mount the pulpit, and with unparalleled audacity to deliver again a long extempore harangue against the king, his sister, the duchess d'Estampes, and all who were even remotely suspected by this daring enthusiast of favouring the reformation. This was the very offence for which Béda before had suffered banishment twice; and the heinousness of his defiance was, if possible, augmented by the critical period which he selected for this his third attack. The forbearance of Francis was exhausted; and he determined to silence for ever the factious theologian who thus insolently defied his authority. Béda was accordingly arrested on the charge of high treason: his trial was expeditiously proceeded with. The sentence of the court degraded Béda from his office of syndic, and condemned him to perform penance with a torch in his hand before the porch of Nôtre Dame for having spoken malignantly and falsely of his sovereign lord the king, and afterwards to perpetual imprisonment in the fortress of Mont St. Michel.* This sentence was carried into rigorous execution, as the king refused to commute the punishment, which all peacefully inclined persons throughout the kingdom acknowledged to be richly deserved. Béda died a prisoner about eighteen months after his condemnation.

About the commencement of this year, 1537, the cantons of Zurich, of Berne, and of Bâle, and the inhabitants of Strasburgh, had sent deputies to intercede with the king in favour of his imprisoned Lutheran subjects, and to implore his royal clemency for those who had fled from the kingdom to escape the pursuit of the Chambers. Francis declined to receive the Swiss envoys, but sent them the following message through the marshal de Montmorency: "That he would grant leave to any of his banished subjects to return to the realm, provided they would abjure the crimes charged upon them by their bishops and vicars, and give security for their good behaviour in future."* This answer, which the ambassadors considered as indicative of the determination of the king to relax none of his rigorous measures, was attributed to the influence of the marshal de Montmorency. The same proposition had been made to the reformers before the promulgation of the decree which banished them from their homes and kindred. A second and more solemn embassy was therefore despatched to Paris by the cantons, to entreat Francis, in consideration of the gallant service rendered him by the Swiss troops during his recent conflict with the emperor, to mitigate the severity of these conditions. The period was well chosen by the Swiss for their renewed intercession. Montmorency was at this juncture absent from Paris at the camp at Pernes; and the queen of Navarre was sojourning with her brother at St. Germains.

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* Erasmus,—Ep. 27. Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique—Article: Noël Bedier.

The ambassadors received instructions to address themselves in the first instance to the king's sister, the queen of Navarre, "who was a most incomparable lady, and very well affected to the true religion," says a contemporary historian† of these events. Marguerite received the envoys with goodness and affability; she gladly promised to unite her intercession to theirs, and to obtain them an audience of the king. The sorrows and persecutions endured by the French reformers the queen regarded as griefs of her own; she was familiar with their writings, and but few of them had not at some time or another benefited by her protection. The king, at the request of his sister, received the deputies with courtesy: he thought it expedient, however, to repeat in substance the message he had before sent them through Montmorency; in private, however, he promised that something of the rigour of his conditions should be relaxed at their instance. It was probably by the hand of these Swiss envoys that Marguerite, with royal generosity, sent the sum of 4,000 francs to distribute amongst the poor and afflicted Protestant ministers who had found refuge from persecution at Strasbourg, Geneva, and Zurich. "These alms," says the historian Sleidan, "were the fruits of her goodness and piety, and offered a signal testimony of her liberal and royal generosity."

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* Sleidan,—Commentar. † Ibid.

Marguerite and the duchess d'Estampes are accused by Roman Catholic historians of having made a third attempt to lure the king from the faith of his ancestors. One of the most popular and eloquent preachers in Paris was Nicolas le Coq, curé of St. Eustache, whose sermons attracted crowded congregations. Like many of the most learned men of the day, Le Coq had imbibed some of the leading doctrines of the reformers, without having declared himself openly a disciple either of Luther or of Zuinglius. His opinions, however, on the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, coincided with the views of the Swiss reformer, rather than with the doctrine of Luther, which admitted a real presence, whilst the elements of bread and wine remained unchanged. The popularity of the curé of St. Eustache shielded him from the persecutions of the Sorbonne: his reputation was great; and as his personal influence appeared unlimited over certain eminent members of his congregation, any attempt, it was thought, to molest him would have met with defeat. Marguerite and the duchess d'Estampes determined, therefore, to avail themselves of the favoured though injudicious Le Coq, to expound before the king his views on the sacrament, the most dangerous as well as the most hotly contested point of the controversy between the Reformed and the Romish Churches. When the turn of the curé de St. Eustache came to preach before the king, he chose the doctrine of the Real Presence for the subject of his address. After descanting with unrivalled eloquence on the opinions maintained on this sacred subject by the various religious parties then dividing Christendom, the preacher burst forth into a glowing eulogium when he pronounced the name of Zuinglius. He maintained that the Church had taken extraordinary precaution to warn the faithful that the body and blood of Christ was only taken symbolically under both kinds in the holy communion; and that before the prayer consecrating the elements was pronounced, the Church by her solemn admonition taught her children the light in which the sacrament ought to be received. "Let us not then descend to that which lieth before us on the altar, but let us rise to heaven by faith: *sursùm corda, sursùm corda!*" The preacher then continued to show that those who would participate rightly in the holy mysteries must lift up their hearts, their thoughts, and desires to heaven, and thus spiritually communicate. The sermon appeared to make great impression upon the king; and when it concluded he commanded the cardinal du Bellay, bishop of Paris, to bring the preacher into his presence, as he desired to confer with him. The audience was a private one, and its purport was never known. The prelates in the royal suite, however, were wonderfully scandalized at the address. Unfortunately for Le Coq, the cardinal de Tournon was one of his auditory, and he represented the matter a few days subsequently in so strong a light to the king, and expatiated so warmly on the daring insolence of the preacher, that Francis, who was only dazzled and not convinced by the eloquence of the curé, consented that proceedings should be instituted to remove from the Church so plausible a dissentient. Marguerite and the duchess d'Estampes, therefore, were compelled to acknowledge their share in the transaction; and though with two such powerful protectors the curé of St. Eustache had not much to dread from his enemies, yet he thought it most prudent, on the first expostulation addressed to him by the cardinal bishop of Paris, to withdraw the objectionable passages from his sermon. This concession having been obtained, the king commanded that no further molestation should be offered to Le Coq, who was suffered to continue his public ministrations, though with a proportionable loss of influence.* The affair of the curé de St. Eustache caused a great sensation in Paris; the king, it was perceived, was by no means so firmly resolved to uphold the Roman theologians as it had been hoped; while Marguerite and the duchess d'Estampes, far from being intimidated, showed themselves ready to renew the strife between the two parties at every favourable opportunity. The influence possessed by the marshal de Montmorency and the cardinal de Tournon was the only counterpoise to the perpetual attempts of the queen and the duchess to overthrow the supremacy of the Church of Rome in France. Madame d'Estampes openly avowed her dislike of Montmorency, and daily became a warmer partisan of his rival in the royal favour, the admiral de Brion. At this period the eminent services rendered by the marshal put down every attempt to supersede him in the king's favour; especially, also, as the queen of Navarre counteracted by her opinion and advice the hostile insinuations infused into the king's mind by the duchess, that Montmorency desired to monopolize the entire glory and credit of the war, to the detriment of his royal master's fame.

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* Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie. Maimbourg,—Hist. du Calvinisme.

The sudden illness of the king of Navarre again delayed the departure of the royal pair into Béarn, where the defenceless condition of many of the towns and fortresses on the frontier inspired Marguerite with great fear lest the emperor might effect a second invasion of France through the territories of her husband. Henry's malady was a serious attack of jaundice, accompanied by fever and many dangerous symptoms. For the space of four days his life was despaired of. The same fever was making frightful ravages throughout the country; and in most cases it terminated fatally, the duke de Vendôme and many valiant officers in the service of the king having fallen victims to the disease. The king himself was suffering at Lyons from a slight attack of the epidemic; while queen Eleanor and the dauphin had retired to Fontainebleau to avoid infection.

Marguerite and her husband were sojourning at St. Cloud during the period of Henry's illness; but as soon as the king could bear the motion of a litter they removed to Vanves for change of air. Henry's convalescence was much retarded by his restless anxiety to take a personal share in the negotiations then pending at the village of Bourg for the conclusion of a truce. The restoration of the kingdom of Navarre was the design ever paramount in his mind, and the hope that Francis would at length take some decisive measure to perform the promise he had made him, alone induced Henry to temporize, or submit patiently to Montmorency's arrogance and the king's interference in his domestic concerns. Marguerite herself was no less desirous that her husband should be reinstated in his rights; and to guard that this important affair was not overlooked in the pending negotiations, the queen wrote from Vanves to remind the marshal of the matter. "If God sends us peace through your mediation, I pray you, mon nepveu, to hold the kingdom of Navarre in memory, and to use your utmost efforts to restore it to those from whom it has been despoiled for manifesting their devotion to France. It will be an action redounding very much to the king's honour if he should succeed in restoring the heritage of his brother-in-law; and would afford a notable example to all princes, that the king never omits to reward good service. You are aware that the late grand master de Boisy took the matter in hand with great success. I flatter myself, mon nepveu, that you bear the king of Navarre not less friendship than the late grand master, who had no intimate knowledge of the king, but served him only out of compassion for the wrong done to him."* Montmorency, however, had no desire to forward the interests of the king of Navarre; nor was it probable that Francis, who could not obtain the Milanese for himself—a duchy situated in the centre of a country full of divisions and tumult—could exact from the emperor the restoration of Navarre to the House of Albret, a kingdom incorporated in every respect with the Spanish monarchy. The conferences at Bourg, besides, were holden to promote the conclusion of an armistice, solely as regarded the war on the frontiers of Flanders; and not for the negotiation of peace throughout the dominions of Francis and the emperor, as hostilities still continued in Savoy.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8550. The grand master de Boisy eloquently asserted the claims of the House of Albret to the kingdom of Navarre at the conference of Montpellier, which was interrupted by his decease in 1519. The Spanish government then, for the first and only time, appeared inclined to make restitution of Navarre.

The continuation of the war in Piedmont, and rumours of an intended assault by the Imperialists on the town of Bayonne, raised great apprehensions in the minds of the sovereigns of Béarn; Marguerite, therefore, became extremely anxious to depart from Vanves as soon as the health of the king of Navarre permitted, and meantime she wrote to the marshal de Montmorency, praying him to provide for the safety of the important frontier of the principality, across which the Imperial troops had so often made a descent upon Bayonne. "The king of Navarre, mon nepveu, is very much discomforted at being detained from serving where he would desire; so much so, that I have not dared to show him the despatch sent here by M. de Bordeaux, but about which I have just written fully to M. de Saint André. M. de Bordeaux seems to believe that it is the fault of the king of Navarre that his request for succour has not been granted. The king of Navarre, however, has done his duty by beseeching the king to send thither some efficient person, or to go himself; he is so weary of expostulating in vain, and without receiving the slightest satisfaction, that I dare not mention the subject to him again while he remains in his present state of health. I beseech you, therefore, mon nepveu, to send the succours which M. de Bordeaux asks, under the command of any whom it may please the king to nominate; for time is short, and the emperor desires to surprise us by a sudden stroke. I have frequently told you that the king of Navarre has not a single place in the principality which could stand an assault; he has not yet established military order throughout his dominions, for besides that during his absence it would have been impossible, the king wished that no hostile demonstration should be made until after the assembly of the Cortés of Spain. Therefore, if you do not provide for the garrisons of Bayonne and Dax, our frontier is very weak, and incapable of offering resistance to the enemy. I entreat you, mon nepveu, to take what I say into your serious consideration; for I confess my fears to you, knowing how greatly you have the welfare of the king and his realm at heart."*

In a few days after Marguerite had written thus pressingly to the marshal, she resumed, in company with her husband, her journey into Béarn. King Francis, before his sister's departure, was convalescent again; and the tidings she received of the war in Piedmont, and the muster of troops at Lyons, seemed most satisfactory. Eager to render her brother service, Marguerite entered with alacrity into the projects of the king of Navarre for the fortification of Guyenne and Béarn. She seems to have discussed the most minute incident relative to the plan to be pursued in case Charles's army crossed the frontiers; and to have made herself conversant with the names of all the officers employed in the service of the king. It gave her serious disquietude, nevertheless, that Montmorency had not as yet heeded her request to send succours for the efficient garrison of Bayonne and Dax. In her letter of farewell to her brother, she again strongly insisted on the necessity of this measure. She says: "Monseigneur, although I have not been able to take personal leave of you, I most humbly commend myself to your loving favour; and I pray you receive the tears which from afar I shed on bidding you adieu, and let this letter bear to you the words which I would have uttered. If it were not for the hope I entertain of rendering you good service there, where I go, I should not have strength to bear this separation. I regret so much to perceive that amid all your urgent affairs the king of Navarre and myself are rendering you so little service that we will not visit a single place without giving you some evidence of our zeal. If I presume, monseigneur, to be importunate upon any affair which concerns you, pardon me; but if you perceive that my request is a reasonable one, command, I pray you, that its execution may not be delayed. I trust, monseigneur, that during our sojourn [in Béarn] we may meet with no misadventure. That which I dread most is a surprise, to which we unfortunately are liable, as the urgent demands of M. de Bordeaux for aid have not yet been complied with; therefore, I desire greatly, if possible, that M. de St. André may be despatched so as to arrive [at Bordeaux] before ourselves."* The king hastened to send the succours demanded by his sister. He moreover summoned the king of Navarre to join him without delay at Lyons; and to Marguerite's astonishment, Francis despatched to her powers to discharge the functions of governor of the province of Guyenne during her husband's absence. The queen unhesitatingly accepted the responsible office; and prepared to fulfil its varied duties with energy and courage. Her activity at this season is astonishing; and her journeys throughout Guyenne and Béarn seem endless. Her principal adviser was De Burie, lieutenant-governor of Guyenne, who, during Henry's absence, took the command of the important frontier fortress of Bayonne, to watch the movements of the Imperial army encamped in Navarre and the adjacent provinces. "As it has pleased you, monseigneur, to confide in me to serve you [in Guyenne] during the absence of the king of Navarre, if the ability to do so equalled my affection, you could not have appointed a more efficient governor. Nevertheless, despite the incompetency, of which I am so sensible, I trust in Him who ordained me to be your sister, that He will give me sufficient grace to render you some service; or at least not to damage the admirable order hitherto maintained here by the king of Navarre,"* wrote Marguerite, when acknowledging the trust reposed in her by her brother. The queen continues to assure the king that she will maintain a vigilant guard over the frontiers, and for that purpose she proposed to depart immediately for Mont de Marsan. "If the English king, monseigneur, should accomplish a descent on these coasts [of Guyenne], as it is rumoured, and the Spaniards make common cause with him, I pray you to devise some expedient, in your wisdom, through which these countries may be defended,"† added Marguerite, whose opinion of Henry VIII. was the reverse of flattering, as she never scruples to express in her correspondence, despite her brother's partiality for Henry, and his trust in the English monarch's insincere professions. From a subsequent letter written by queen Marguerite from Mont de Marsan, it would appear that Francis had inconsiderately solicited his sister to resign her command into the hands of M. de Burie, and to join him at Lyons. This proposal Marguerite declined, excusing herself on the urgency of the king's affairs in Guyenne and Béarn, which required all her devotion to his interests to manage. From Mont de Marsan, Marguerite proceeded to Dax; in which place she summoned a council of war, consisting of M. de Burie, the archbishop of Bordeaux, and the sénéschal of the Bazadois. De Burie had solicited the queen to advance as near as possible to the neighbourhood of Bayonne to confer with him, as the town was in such peril of sudden assault that he dare not abandon it.* Marguerite made a sojourn of three days at Dax. "MM. de Burie, de Bordeaux, the sénéschal of the Bazadois, and myself, have made a thorough examination of the fortifications of this town. We discovered one very dangerous point, as M. de Burie has already written to you, monseigneur. I beseech you do not delay to put this place in an efficient state of defence. I have already caused the works to be commenced on my own credit;"† wrote Marguerite to the king. She also expressed very serious apprehension relative to the safety of Bayonne. A conspiracy had been discovered amongst the garrison, which probably had for its object to deliver the fortress into the hands of the Imperialists. She speaks as if her sudden arrival at Dax had put to rout the designs of the conspirators. "I thank God, monseigneur, that I depart hence the day after to-morrow, leaving the affair I mentioned to you so cleared up that, for the wealth of the emperor, I would not have missed seeing the proofs of that plot which M. de Burie now holds in his hands."‡ In another letter to her brother, written almost simultaneously, Marguerite gallantly says: "If it be true, monseigneur, as it is asserted, that our neighbours over the frontiers are inclined to make an expedition for the capture of Bayonne, or of this place [Dax], I would not quit it until I had caused them to be repulsed with such loss as shall give them a wholesome dread of essaying another feat of arms on our territory."§ Marguerite greatly lauds the science and loyalty displayed by De Burie, in organizing the defence

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 9127.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 65, Bib. Royale.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 53, Bibl. Royale.

† Ibid.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 85.

† Ibid, MS. No. 34.

‡ F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 25, Bibl. Roy.

§ Ibid, MS. No. 34.

of the provinces of Guyenne, Gascony, and Béarn. "Whilst M. de Burie remains your lieutenant here, monseigneur, we may sleep in peace and safety, fully assured that he will take every needful precaution for the safety of your dominions."* On account of the great expenses which M. de Burie's office entailed upon him, and which his private fortune was inadequate to defray, he had announced, to the queen's dismay, his intention to relinquish his command on the termination of the war. He explained to Marguerite, during her interview with him at Dax, that the long absences of the king of Navarre, governor of Guyenne, very materially increased his expenses, as the cost of receptions and entertainments to the various officers of the province devolved upon him, without any adequate salary being apportioned. The queen promised to use her influence with her brother to remedy the grievance of which M. de Burie complained, and she eventually exerted herself so effectually in his favour that a proper remuneration for his services was assigned him by the king.

From Dax, the queen of Navarre proceeded to Bordeaux. During her sojourn in the capital of Guyenne, Marguerite, in her character of governor of the province, went down in state to the chamber where the parliament of Bordeaux assembled, to demand the release of Andrew Melancthon, brother of the celebrated reformer, who was incarcerated in the Conciergerie, for preaching the doctrines of Luther in the town of Agen, and its neighbourhood. Melancthon had written urgent letters to the queen of Navarre, to pray her to obtain his brother's release, whose zeal in making converts had procured him a dangerous notoriety, and many months of painful imprisonment in the diocesan prisons of Bordeaux. The senators were either very favourably disposed to grant any petition addressed to them by queen Marguerite; or perhaps they were confounded at her assurance in presuming to make public suit for a heretic, as they unanimously decreed the liberation of Andrew Melancthon, on condition that he quitted Guyenne.† Marguerite expressed herself content to abide by this reservation; and a few days subsequently she took satisfactory and affectionate leave of the loyal Bordelais.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 28.

† Florimond de Rémond, Hist. de l'Hérésie.

The queen had now traversed nearly the whole of Guyenne, Béarn, and Gascony, visiting the fortresses, and conferring with their various commanders. Her presence had reassured the inhabitants of Bordeaux; and especially the garrison of Bayonne, a town, from its position, likely to be first assailed in case of sudden invasion. Her courage inspired the inhabitants of the provinces with resolution to make a vigorous defence; and the devotion she manifested for the king greatly kindled their loyalty. The succours she solicited so ardently had also arrived: and before she quitted Guyenne, Marguerite had the satisfaction of knowing that the fortifications of Dax were repaired, and the troops quartered in Bordeaux, efficiently reinforced by the arrival of M. de St. André, and his company; so that the city was in condition to stand a siege.

Francis, meanwhile, being on the point of quitting Lyons to lead his army into Savoy, sent the queen very peremptory commands to join him without delay; and to insure her obedience he despatched the king of Navarre to escort her to the court. Marguerite, therefore, on quitting Bordeaux, repaired to Limoges to meet her husband. On her arrival at Limoges, the count Bossut de Longueval requested an audience to present a letter from the king. This letter contained merely a hurried greeting from Francis to his sister, telling her that the count, who had just quitted Lyons, would inform her of his health and well-being. Longueval, however, to the infinite surprise of the queen, added that he was commissioned by the king to desire her to await the arrival of the duchess d'Estampes, who was expected at Limoges with the king of Navarre, and not upon any account to proceed to Lyons without her. Marguerite herself had received directions precisely to the contrary from her brother, who strictly required her to go alone to Lyons and confer with him. The king of Navarre arrived a day or two afterwards without Madame d'Estampes: the duchess, however, made her appearance at Limoges in the course of the same day; and presenting herself before Marguerite, she reiterated the assertion made by Longueval. Marguerite was much perplexed how to act; especially as the king of Navarre declared that he had received no command respecting the duchess from the king. The queen never placed reliance on the truth and sincerity of Madame d'Estampes, of whose egotistical character she was aware, though policy compelled her to live with her on tolerable terms. It occurred to Marguerite, therefore, that the duchess, uneasy at her separation from the king, and at the little anxiety displayed by him to see her again, had adopted the bold scheme of travelling to Lyons in her suite, as if by the queen's invitation, hoping thus to avoid the responsibility of repairing thither alone. The count de Longueval was one of the most devoted adherents of the duchess d'Estampes, and enjoyed her unlimited confidence; he was consequently disliked by the king, whose penetration discovered the perfidy of his character. Even at this period it appears that Francis suspected Longueval of holding disloyal intelligences with the emperor; and that he believed the duchess herself was not totally exempt from reproach, though her beauty and plausibility yet imposed upon him. Finding that the message delivered by these two specious allies was not confirmed by the king of Navarre, Marguerite, determined not to be made a dupe by Madame d'Estampes, sent the duchess word, "that it was true she was about to visit the king to solicit a grace for the king of Navarre; but she had received commands to go alone, therefore, to undertake so responsible a thing as to take with her one of the ladies of queen Eleanor's household* without permission, would at once destroy her hopes of a successful suit. Nevertheless, it was her intention to proceed to Toulouse, and there await any commands the king might send her respecting the duchess." From Toulouse Marguerite therefore despatched a messenger to Lyons, to ask directions from her brother whether she was to proceed to visit him alone, or in company with the duchess d'Estampes. "I have to request you again, monseigneur," wrote Marguerite, "that in all things you wish me to do, you will send me directions from yourself, or through those *who possess your esteem*, as whatever may be your commands I will obey. Be not displeased, therefore, if I insist that you always write to me your will; for I fear not to fall short of fulfilling it, if only I am assured of your desire; but I have witnessed so much dissimulation and intrigue, that I can only put entire faith in your own handwriting."* From the strong expressions used by Marguerite relative to Madame d'Estampes, and her friend the count de Longueval, it manifestly appears that the faith of Francis in the integrity of his favourite had even thus early been shaken. Marguerite in another part of the same letter, is even more explicit on the subject; referring to her perplexity on receiving such a communication from the duchess, and Longueval, the queen says: "Monseigneur, you may imagine my anxiety after the discourse you were pleased to hold to me when I last took leave of you, relative to *her*, and to *him* who gave me this commandment in your name, especially as the king of Navarre disowned all knowledge of the matter." Francis responded to his sister's appeal by desiring her to continue her journey; while to Madame d'Estampes he apparently also sent permission to join him at Lyons. The duchess therefore continued her journey alone; but before her departure from Limoges she could not refrain from boasting of what she thought a triumph over the queen of Navarre, by writing to Marguerite, who was still at Toulouse, that she hoped to see the king, the first of the two.

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* The duchesse d'Estampes was *dame d'atours* to queen Eleanor.

The queen of Navarre remained for some days with the king at Lyons. She found Francis in good health, and indulging in sanguine speculations on the success of the war. She then took her departure for Fontainebleau at the express desire of the king, where queen Eleanor and the dauphiness lay ill of the fever, which still continued to ravage the midland provinces of France.

The arrival of the queen of Navarre was hailed with joy by her young niece Marguerite, who found the court very dull during her father's absence. The queen was perpetually absorbed by melancholy, or by the rigid devotion prescribed by her confessor. Catherine de Medici, also a neglected wife, was likewise too overwhelmed with her own anxieties to become the companion of her youthful sister-in-law. The ascendency which the beautiful Diane de Poitiers, duchess de Valentinois, had acquired over the mind of the dauphin, was keenly felt by the haughty Florentine princess, who had been, moreover, menaced with divorce, as after a union with the dauphin of nearly five years, she had not given birth to an heir to the crown, an event passionately desired by her husband. Subtle and insinuating in disposition, Catherine paid assiduous court to the king, and to his sister the queen of Navarre; and to please the latter she ever affected a predilection for reform. Soon after the decease of the dauphin Francis, Henry had caused a formal demand of divorce from his consort Catherine to be laid before the privy council, on the ground of her sterility and his own want of affection for her. In order to concert measures with better prospect of success, the dauphin and his mistress the duchess de Valentinois, with several of the most zealous advocates of the divorce, held a secret assembly in the castle of Rousillon-sur-Rhone, to arrive at a determinate decision upon the necessary steps to be pursued in order to accomplish this end.* Catherine's peril was imminent; she possessed neither striking personal charms, nor powerful parentage to shield her from the intrigues of her enemies. She had scarcely attained her seventeenth year, although it had suited the ambitious schemes of Diane de Poitiers prematurely to circulate a report that she could never bear children. The young dauphiness, however, possessed a weapon which, powerful as were her adversaries, enabled her, although comparatively friendless, to foil their designs. A spirit of fearless intrepidity and sagacity slumbered beneath the calm and apparently passionless bearing of the dauphiness; she spoke little, but she read with unerring penetration the plans and motives of others. Her temper was subject to her will; and her powers of dissimulation were unrivalled, even in a court filled with intrigues and cabals such as was that of Francis. Catherine's manners were soft and polished; her voice was melodious; and no one at court excelled more than she did in elegance of costume. She was a perfect horsewoman; and to ingratiate herself with Francis, she frequently accompanied him in his hunting expeditions throughout the kingdom. In seeking to create for herself a great political position by rendering court to the king and other influential personages, Catherine committed the grave error of neglecting her husband's wishes and opinions, while she directed elsewhere her numerous fascinations of mind. Until Henry's accession to the rank of dauphin, Catherine's influence was superior to his own, from the attachment felt for her by the king; his first act therefore, when he possessed the power, was to combine with her enemies to overthrow the object which had long given him umbrage.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8546.

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* De Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

The tears and seeming submission of the dauphiness, however, raised her a powerful protectress in the queen of Navarre, who remonstrated with her nephew on the meeting which he had sanctioned at Rousillon-sur-Rhone, and strongly represented to him the cruelty and injustice of the proposed measure. "During these vile machinations, madame, then indeed did you seek relief with bitter tears and supplications from Him who alone could afford it," writes a gentleman of queen Marguerite's chamber, some twenty years after these events, to Catherine de Medici, who was then, as regent of France, exhibiting bitter hostility to the Protestants;* "at that time you acknowledged your dependence upon the Omnipotent, and made the Bible your daily study, never suffering the sacred volume to be removed from your table. During this happy period all your women imitated your good example, with the exception of your nurse, who, in her heart, loved you, madame, as little as she did her God." Catherine knew that nothing would sooner enlist Marguerite's sympathy and support than this devout deportment, which she carried on with wonderful outward consistency.

Queen Marguerite did not fail to use her good offices with the king; and Francis, whose own partiality for the dauphiness almost rendered his sister's exhortation needless, gave it as his royal opinion: "*Que c'etoit cruauté de se defaire d'une femme virtueuse et sage; et sottise d'en*

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* Lettre de Villemadon à Catherine de Medici, datée le 26 Août, 1559. Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique :· Article,—Diane de Poitiers

supporter une vicieuse."* With skilful tact the dauphiness indirectly caused representations to be made to the marshal de Montmorency, who supported Henry's projects. She caused him to be reminded of the admiration which the dauphin evinced for Marie, daughter of the duke de Guise, who had just lost her husband, the duke de Longueville, and whose hand was eagerly demanded by the kings of England and Scotland. Montmorency instantly took alarm; he had no desire to elevate the duchess de Longueville to the throne of France, and thus give the House of Guise preponderance in the state above his own. Catherine, with great address, next assailed the duchesse de Valentinois. It was observed to that very ambitious lady, that the dauphin, instead of sharing the throne with her as she hoped, would infallibly, in case of his divorce, espouse either the daughter or the niece of the emperor, or else bestow his hand on Marie de Lorraine. In both cases it was represented to the duchess that her separation from the dauphin was inevitable; the two first-mentioned ladies possessed sufficient influence to insist on her immediate banishment from court; while the charms of the widowed duchess de Longueville would inthral the dauphin's affection, and thus destroy her power. These arguments, and others as skilfully administered, so alarmed the marshal and Diane de Poitiers that they united at length in imploring the dauphin to refrain from his project; they conjured him to do nothing precipitately, but to submit his desires to the will of Providence, who especially watched over the perpetuation of royal lineages.† Henry could scarcely contain his surprise; for he had heard the same argument scornfully rejected by both when before advanced by the cardinal de Châtillon, one of Catherine's warmest friends. It was more difficult to overcome the resolve of the dauphin now that he had been prevailed upon to sue for a divorce, than it was found in the first instance to determine him to that measure. The affair of the divorce, therefore, continued to be agitated, Henry meanwhile displaying the greatest aversion for his consort, until the visit which Francis paid to Fontainebleau before the arrival of the queen of Navarre at Lyons. Catherine, then overwhelmed with anxiety and suspense, one day presented herself before the king, and in an agony of tears cast herself at his feet, praying that as her divorce seemed determined upon, she might not be forced into a marriage with a prince of inferior degree. In a voice broken by her sobs, she requested permission to retire to the convent Delle Murate, in Florence, where she had been educated, and where she promised to spend the remainder of her days in seclusion, praying for the welfare and prosperity of France.* Concerned and affected at the tears of the dauphiness, and the wildness of her grief, Francis hastened to raise her from her suppliant position, and embracing her affectionately, he vowed to protect her interests, and to suffer no injury to befall her while he lived. When the king authoritatively interfered in any affair, it became virtually a settled question; and as he peremptorily forbad the dauphin to pursue the divorce, Catherine thus beheld herself delivered from fear of the misfortune which menaced her.†

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* Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

† Ibid.

The arrival of the queen of Navarre produced beneficial effects on the health of her god-daughter the princess Marguerite, whose spirits had suffered from the premature decease of her sister Madelaine, queen of Scotland,‡ and her companionship with queen Eleanor and the dauphiness. Marguerite and her niece used to walk and read together: the queen also persuaded the young princess to take early rambles in the fresh morning air; and often at sunrise she accompanied her to look at the numerous herds of deer scattered over the vast park and forest at Fontainebleau. One day they went together to visit a choice vineyard and winepress belonging to the king. The queen of Navarre held an amusing colloquy with the wife of the vine-dresser, Janot, on the insalubrious state of the air, and the ravages committed by the fever. Madame Janot informed her royal visitors that all her husband's servants had been ill, either of the fever or with ague; but although they took no better nourishment than what was afforded by their usual diet of garlic, onions, and pure water, yet they rapidly recovered. This adventure afforded Marguerite great amusement, and she recounted it to Montmorency, with many praises of the beauty of the vineyard, and the prosperous condition of the vines, which gave promise of a plentiful vintage.*

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* Tenhove,—History of the House of Medici.

† Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

‡ Queen Madelaine died in 1537.

The king at this season was in Savoy, at Carignan, with his victorious army. Francis was accompanied by the dauphin and by the marshal de Montmorency, who, in fact, was invested with supreme command. The marquis del Guasto had been compelled to retreat before the advance of the French; Montcallier, Carignan, Riva, and Villeneuve, successively opened their gates to the royal army. Marguerite wrote to congratulate her brother on the triumphant success of his arms; she informed him of the convalescence of the queen; and entreated him to suffer her to join him at the camp, as Eleanor had no longer occasion for her services at Fontainebleau. This request, however, must have been prompted by Marguerite's enthusiasm, rather than from any hope that it could be granted. She says: "Monseigneur, if I am to be deprived of your society, I hold the condition of the wives of your German mercenaries superior to my own: for in serving their husbands they have at least the satisfaction of seeing you—a boon which I, who desire this sight above all things, cannot obtain. Such is my longing to accomplish the journey, that I would renounce my royal blood to be servant to your washerwoman; and to tell you the honest truth, monseigneur, I have a great mind to lay aside my robe of cloth of gold, and visit you in disguise." Marguerite continues to give her brother an account of the honours and friendship conferred upon her by queen Eleanor and Mesdames, "who treat me, monseigneur, with such respect and consideration that I might be the mother of them all."†

The queen, however, was compelled very shortly after writing this letter, to leave her pleasant companions and add another journey of anguish and suspense to the many it had already been her lot to endure; and her sorrowful recital of the new anxiety which had befallen her, quickly followed the despatch of her former epistle to the king.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8550.

† F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 79. Bibl. Royale.

CHAPTER VIII.

Illness of the princess Jane of Navarre—Distress of queen Marguerite—She quits Paris — Her sojourn at Bourg-la-Royne— Her interview with the bishop of Seez—Letter of the queen to Montmorency—The viscount de Rohan — His pecuniary difficulties—Marguerite visits Boisgency—Generosity displayed by the queen towards her sister-in-law—Marguerite joins her brother at Montpellier—Conferences at Leucate—Paul III. offers his mediation to the sovereigns—An interview between the emperor and Francis is proposed—Francis and his sister proceed to Moulins—The sword of constable is bestowed on Montmorency—The ceremonial observed—Arrogant deportment of the constable—The conferences at Nice—The emperor and the pope arrive at Villeneuve—Francis and his court take up their residence at Villefranche—The king visits the pope—Paul receives queen Eleanor and her suite of ladies—Negotiations are opened by the pope—Eleanor visits the emperor—Queen Marguerite declines to accompany the queen—Accident which befell Eleanor—Letter addressed by the emperor to the king—Failure of the attempt made by Paul to negotiate peace—Queen Eleanor pays a second visit to the emperor—Festivities of the two courts—Termination of the conference—Departure of the pope from Nice—The king repairs to Avignon—Charles, on his voyage back to Barcelona, is compelled by stress of weather to take shelter with his fleet on the coasts of Provence—Message sent to the emperor by king Francis—Charles announces his desire to confer with Francis at Aigues-Mortes His correspondence with the king—Interview between Francis and the emperor—Satisfaction of the king—Condition of the court—The intrigues of the Duchesse d'Estampes and of Madame de Valentinois—Bigotry of the constable—He attempts to sow division between the king and queen Marguerite—Indignation of Francis—Illness of the king—Arrival of the Imperial ambassadors at Compiègne, to request a passage for the emperor through France—Rebellion of the Gantois—They tender their allegiance to Francis—The king refuses to countenance their revolt—Letter written by Francis to the emperor

—The arrival of the emperor in France—His magnificent reception —His entry into Poitiers—Present offered to him from that town—Francis and his court arrive at Orleans—The king retires to Amboise —He receives Charles at Loches—Entry of the emperor into the town of Orleans—His address to the authorities of the town—They present him with a *gift*—Departure of king Francis and the emperor from Orleans—The municipality wait upon queen Eleanor to take leave — Reply made to their address by the queen of Navarre.

As soon as queen Eleanor was sufficiently recovered to travel, the court removed from Fontainebleau to Châtillon, and from thence to the palace of St. Germain-en-Laye.

The month of December had closed in, and the days were gloomy and short, when Marguerite received a hasty despatch from Madame de Silly announcing the serious illness of the little princess Jeanne at Plessis-les-Tours, who had been seized with a dangerous attack of fever and dysentery. In addition to this alarming intelligence, the verbal report brought by the messenger added if possible to Marguerite's disquietude. She learned that the condition of the princess* was considered to be extremely critical by her medical attendants, who expressed great fears respecting her recovery; for the violence of the malady, and the exhausting sickness which afflicted the princess during two whole days, had reduced her to a deplorable state of weakness. Madame de Silly therefore urgently besought Marguerite to relieve her by her presence at Plessis from the responsibility of her office. Marguerite's affection for her daughter was great; and the welfare and education of the little princess absorbed many of her thoughts. Doubtless she suffered much anxiety from her separation from her only child; but Marguerite never resisted the omnipotent fiat of Francis, and her life was a constant sacrifice to his pleasure. The news of the illness of the princess Jeanne reached Paris about four o'clock one afternoon. As soon as Marguerite had perused the afflicting news, she proclaimed her intention of setting out for Plessis without the delay of a single hour. It was a most inclement evening, and the rain was pouring in torrents. The servants and suite of the queen of Navarre were, moreover, scattered over

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* The princess Jane had just completed her ninth year.

Paris and the neighbouring villages. She had even few of her personal attendants in waiting at the time; and her travelling equipages had been conveyed to so distant a place for the winter, that it was hopeless to summon them speedily enough to make her journey to Plessis of any avail. Undaunted by these obstacles, Marguerite, who unwaveringly fulfilled any duty at however great a sacrifice of personal comfort, borrowed a litter belonging to her niece, the princess Marguerite, and hastily assembling her attendants, she bade them prepare for instant departure for Tourraine; such being the queen's expedition that a few hours after the tidings of her daughter's danger reached Paris, she had quitted the capital.

At nightfall the little troop arrived at a place called Bourg-la-Royne, where the queen consented to rest until the morning. Instead of proceeding to her lodging, Marguerite went first to the church, in order to offer a solemn supplication to God for the life of her daughter. The queen alighted from her litter, and followed by the sénéchale of Poitou, she entered the church, having previously requested her attendants to await her in the porch, "as her heart was very heavy with a presentiment of her daughter's approaching death." Marguerite then advanced to the high altar, and prostrating herself before it, she besought God, with tears and fervent supplication, to spare the life of the young princess. She then rose, and kneeling with her brow resting on the altar railing, made lowly confession of her own sins, imploring that God would absolve her freely, and remit for His Son's sake the grievous chastisement which menaced her. When she rejoined her attendants the queen exclaimed: "Now have I indeed good hope of God's mercy; and in faith do I humbly rely that He will yet restore my child to me." The queen then entered her litter, and proceeded to the lodging prepared for her. She then supped with the sénéchale of Poitou. It was remarked that Marguerite spoke little during the repast; but the discourse she held was on the mercies which the Almighty vouchsafed to those who showed confidence in His gracious protection.

After supper the queen dismissed her attendants, wishing to pass some time in retirement; and opening the

Bible she commenced perusing it attentively. Suddenly, about two o'clock in the morning, the distant sound of a horn was heard; Marguerite's heart beat, and she closed the book; for that shrill blast in those days heralded the approach of a royal courier. Gradually the sound increased, and the echo of a horse's hoofs on the pavement as the rider approached, became audible. In another few minutes the courier entered the court-yard of the inn. Marguerite rose, and precipitately approaching a window, she threw it open, and inquired the news. No one responded; for the queen's voice was overpowered by the noise and confusion below. At length the door of her apartment opened, and the bishop of Seéz entered. Marguerite was kneeling on the ground, her arms resting on a low couch standing in the embrasure of the window, and her face buried in the folds of her mantle. When the bishop approached, she exclaimed with mournful impetuosity: "Ah, Monsieur de Seéz, do you come to announce the decease of my only child? nay, speak not, I understand well that she now stands in the presence of her God!" The bishop of Seéz, who was one of the most intolerant and self-possessed of the prelates of France, then informed the queen that instead of indulging in bitter wailing, it was her duty to render thanks to Almighty God for the recovery of her daughter, who had been pronounced to be out of danger by Burgency and the other physicians. Marguerite's features became irradiated with joy; clasping her hands together she returned thanks for the restoration of her child ere she would accept or even heed the congratulations of her attendants.* The bishop, when Marguerite was somewhat more composed, detailed the intelligence he had received from the courier; and gave the queen a few lines written by the young princess, addressed to her mother. This precious little note proved a greater consolation to Marguerite than the complimentary assurances of the bishop that all was going on well as she could desire at Plessis.

Before she retired to rest, Marguerite wrote thus to the marshal de Montmorency, to request him to communicate to her brother the happy news of the favourable termination of her daughter's malady:—

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* Sainte Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre de l'incomparable Marguerite.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO THE MARSHAL DE MONTMORENCY.

"Bourg-la-Reine, December, 1537.

"Mon nepveu,—It is now two hours past midnight, and I have just heard (God be praised) that my daughter is pronounced out of danger, and that her fever and dysentery are both much amended. She has even been able to write to me a little note, which I have sent for your perusal; for it seems, as I have given you credit for sharing in my distress, that I should wrong you did I not cause you to partake in that which has been an abundant source of consolation to me. I beg you will say to the king, that God thought not good to take my daughter away so early from the earthly felicity which he has in store for her; though if she had belonged solely to me, death would not have spared her more than that other child whom I still mourn; but seeing that the king has adopted her for his own, the grave refuses to close over another of his children.

"I have led a life of such anxiety since I quitted Paris, that I shall be compelled to keep my chamber during the whole of to-day; for my distress took from me the consciousness of fatigue and pain, of both of which I am only now too sensible.

"I beg you, mon nepveu, send me speedy news of the health of the king, and also of that of the queen, of Messieurs and Mesdames; for should they all continue in prosperity and health, no one will praise God more fervently than

"Vostre bonne tante et amye,
"MARGUERITE."*

As soon as the queen of Navarre recovered from the fatigue of her sudden departure from Paris, she continued her journey to Plessis-les-Tours. The little princess was much better, being pronounced free from dangerous symptoms; but her strength had been so much reduced that she was compelled for many days after her mother's arrival to keep her bed. It was a pleasant duty Marguerite was now called upon to perform, and one which she loved well; and very assiduously, therefore, did she aid Madame de Silly in the care of watching the gradual restoration of the little invalid to her usual health and joyous spirits. Marguerite seems to have enjoyed the tranquillity and seclusion of Plessis: the most active mind requires at times repose and the absence of exciting care;

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8549.

nevertheless, throughout the life of the queen of Navarre, her destiny was such that her days passed in perpetual anxiety. It is a remarkable fact, that no sooner had her exertions procured the satisfactory adjustment of one affair, than another presented itself to absorb in its turn her energy; rarely did Marguerite sojourn a month together in any place; and her journeys were so frequent and varied, that throughout the realm of France there were few villages even, which she had not visited. The influential position occupied by the queen of Navarre, entailed upon her labour and anxieties of no feeble description. She stood, to speak figuratively, on the steps of her brother's throne—the medium, through which the majority of his subjects applied for his royal grace and favour. The royal family of France, the members of the House of Albret, the courtiers, the friendless and oppressed, the French Protestants, and even Madame d'Estampes herself, addressed themselves to Marguerite to procure any extraordinary boon or favour they desired from the sovereign. It pleased Francis, that his sister, "La Marguerite des Marguerites," should occupy this proud position; it gratified his pride, that by the simple declaration of his sovereign will, a princess his sister should exercise an influence superior to that possessed by Eleanor—whose exalted rank seemed to command the most profound homage—or even by the heir-apparent of the crown itself. But in return for his confidence, and for the power and consideration lavished upon her with unsparing hand, Francis exacted from Marguerite a total renunciation of feeling, pursuit, pleasure, or interest, apart from himself. Nevertheless, there are but few instances on record when the devotion which the king required from her proved unwelcome to Marguerite, or her desires aspired to other objects than those originated by her brother. Brought up together from their tenderest infancy, they had been inseparable companions before one of the ties were formed which bound them in domestic duty to others; while, with the exception of the king of Navarre, all these personages thus allied were unfitted from mental deficiency for association with accomplished scholars, such as Francis and Marguerite. The attachment subsisting between the brother and the sister, therefore, which commenced during their earliest years became stronger as the cares of the world and its sorrows assailed them. Francis knew that no one sympathized so truly with him as his sister; while Marguerite experienced no alloy in the felicity she felt at the steadfast affection manifested towards her by her brother, except the deep regret inflicted by his errors, which she never ceased to deplore.

The queen remained nearly a fortnight with her daughter, when she was unexpectedly compelled to make a hurried journey into Bretagne, to Boisgency, the abode of the viscount de Rohan and his consort, the princess Isabel of Navarre. The improvidence of the viscount, added to some serious losses which he sustained through the carelessness of agents, had impaired his fortune to so disastrous an extent, that he found himself unable longer to maintain an establishment suitable to his own rank, and that of his royal consort. The estates of the viscount were heavily mortgaged to the extent of 60,000 livres Tournois, a large amount of money for these days. Two years previously, at a season of great pecuniary difficulty to Isabel's husband, the queen of Navarre generously undertook to provide for the three children of the viscount de Rohan. His two young sons Marguerite placed amongst the pages of honour of Monseigneur the dauphin, and by virtue of this office they were receiving honourable maintenance and education, free of expense to their parents. The queen took her little niece Françoise de Rohan under her own protection, and caused her to be thoroughly educated amongst her train of noble damsels at the castle of Pau.

During Marguerite's sojourn with her daughter at Plessis, she again received a piteous letter from the princess Isabel, who entreated her to journey to her aid. Fresh embarrassments had now entailed almost total ruin on the House of Rohan; and until the viscount's losses could be retrieved, rendered it necessary for Isabel to return to her brother's protection. Marguerite, whose heart ever responded to the promptings of compassion, prepared without delay for this journey, which she thought herself bound to undertake to rescue her husband's sister from the anxiety she was suffering. "When I heard of the extreme distress and need which my sister Madame de Rohan was suffering, and when I knew that without my intervention her husband and her children were likely to be reduced to the condition of the poorest gentlemen in France (not through their own fault, but by the worthlessness of their servants and officers), I felt myself bound by the ties of parentage and honour, to leave my daughter, who was convalescent, to go to the succour of my poor sister,"* said the queen in a letter which she immediately addressed to the marshal de Montmorency, to desire him to inform the king of her proposed journey into Bretagne.

The queen's absence lasted three weeks. With the utmost delicacy and generosity, Marguerite offered Madame de Rohan a home with the princess Jeanne, at Plessis-les-Tours, until the viscount's affairs were re-established. The expenses of the young princess's household were liquidated by the queen from her independent revenues as duchess d'Alençon and de Berry, with some assistance from the king. The queen's offer therefore saved Madame de Rohan from the humiliation of returning to the court of Béarn, as a pensioner on her brother's bounty. The proposal was thankfully accepted by Isabel, whose situation seemed the more afflictive as she was quickly expecting her *accouchement*. Madame de Rohan accordingly took leave of her husband, and attended by two waiting women, she accompanied the queen of Navarre on her return to Tours. Marguerite, moreover, wrote to her brother to solicit his aid for the viscount de Rohan; and she reminds the king of his own near connection, through his grandmother, Marguerite de Rohan, with that fallen house.

The king was at Montpellier awaiting the termination of negotiations, which, through the mediation of queen Mary, regent of the Low Countries, had been opened at the little town of Leucate, in Languedoc, to conclude a suspension of arms as regarded the duchy of Savoy, similar to that recently signed at Bourg. From the grateful thanks which Marguerite tenders to her brother in her reply to his letter, Francis had apparently returned a favourable answer to her solicitations on behalf of the viscount de Rohan and his family; he seems, however, to have rendered his acquiescence in his sister's demand dependent on her immediately joining him at Montpellier. The queen desired to do so above all things; she therefore writes: "Monseigneur, if you could only experience a little of the joy you have given me by the command to hasten to a place which contains all I love most on earth, after the good and charitable deed you have done, such knowledge would afford a greater recompense to you than any in the power of words to bestow."*

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8562.

The negotiations meanwhile at Leucate proceeded slowly and unsatisfactorily. The hatred and suspicion subsisting between Francis and the emperor insensibly imparted itself to their leading ministers, who negotiated as if employed in adjusting private and insignificant interests, instead of appearing as the representatives of two mighty monarchs, to whom the noble mission had been confided of restoring concord throughout Christendom. The plenipotentiaries of France were the marshal de Montmorency and the cardinal de Lorraine; those of the emperor were the chancellor Granvelle and Don Françisco de los Cobos, governor of Leon. The military position maintained by Francis at the period when the conferences opened at Leucate, was indisputably the more brilliant. Nearly the whole of the duchy of Savoy acknowledged his rule; and the humiliating retreat of the emperor from Provence was still fresh in the minds of all men. Notwithstanding the success of the French arms in Savoy, Charles, in this conference, assumed again the rôle of dictator, and all kinds of trivial disputes arose from the assumptions of his ministers, which greatly retarded the negotiations. The king demanded the investiture of the Milanese for his second son, the duke d'Angoulême—the young prince upon whom the emperor had pertinaciously persisted in bestowing the duchy during the conferences at Rome, when the duke held the rank of third prince of the blood. The emperor on his part offered the Milanese to the duke d'Angoulême on the following conditions: a second confirmation of the treaties of Madrid and Cambray; the league of the king of France with the emperor, against the Turks; that Francis should agree to the convocation of a general council; that he renounced his alliance with the Protestant princes of Germany, and restored the dominions of the duke de Savoye. The duke d'Angoulême was required to espouse one of the daughters of the emperor; and, moreover, he was not to be put in possession of the duchy of Milan until this marriage was accomplished.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran. MS., No. 42. Bib. Royale.

Bound by his secret treaty with Soliman II., the king evaded giving a conclusive answer to the demand that he should join the league against the Turks; he observed, with respect to the third article, that on the conclusion of peace between the emperor and himself, his support of the opponents of the House of Austria in Germany would naturally cease. As for the council, Francis refused to be bound by treaty to fulfil a religious duty so manifestly incumbent upon him as the eldest son of the Church. The king declared himself willing to resign Savoy to its duke, and likewise the town of Hesdin to the emperor, on condition that the duke d'Angoulême was simultaneously put into possession of the Milanese.*

The period assigned for the duration of the truce expired while the plenipotentiaries were as yet only occupied with details of ceremony and precedence. It was felt, however, that these negotiations between the ministers of France and Spain could attain to no satisfactory conclusion; the conferences of Calais and Toledo furnished samples of the length and pedantic erudition of the debates usually delivered at such congresses of ministers who, it would appear, studiously avoided the mention of politics in their discourse. The papal legates therefore wrote word to Paul III., that unless his holiness could bring about an interview between the sovereigns themselves, nothing more permanent than a prolongation of the truce would be agreed upon. The same idea had before occurred to the pontiff; for, besides his undoubted desire to restore peace to Christendom, the pope had family interests which he thought might be greatly promoted by a personal conference between the two monarchs. He wished to conclude a family alliance with both the royal Houses of Valois and Hapsburg, by negotiating the marriage of his nephew Ottavio Farnese with the emperor's illegitimate daughter, Marguerite, and that of his niece Victoria, with Antoine, duke de Vendôme.* Paul III. therefore proclaimed his intention of offering his personal mediation to terminate the feuds existing between the sovereigns of France and Spain. The plenipotentiaries were therefore recalled from Leucate by Francis and the emperor, after they had signed a prolongation of the truce for the space of six months, to allow the supreme pontiff leisure to make the requisite preparations for the interview.

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* Du Bellay. Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

Francis and his sister, meantime, quitted Montpellier for Lyons, and from thence they repaired together to the castle of Moulins, once the magnificent residence of the constable de Bourbon. Here Montmorency and the cardinal de Lorraine presented themselves before the king, to report all that had passed at Leucate between themselves and the Imperial envoys. The king received the marshal de Montmorency with expressions of the warmest attachment. His skilful conduct of the war had raised the marshal's military renown above the dread of competition; his defence of Provence, the admirable science displayed in the formation of the camps of Avignon and Valence, his brave defence of Picardy, and the triumphant campaign in Savoy, were services which the king felt merited the highest honour in the power of a sovereign to bestow upon his subject. The queen of Navarre, whose favour never failed Montmorency, applauded the resolve of her brother to confer the sword of constable of France upon his favourite. Queen Eleanor united her timid acquiescence; the dauphin and his consort, who both, from different motives, wished to oblige the marshal, declared their satisfaction. The duchess d'Estampes alone dissented, with the bitter vehemence which a woman, young, beautiful, and assured of her power, could only venture upon. She reproached the king with his want of politic caution in again investing a subject with the formidable power which, in the hands of the constable de Bourbon, nearly overthrew the monarchy. She warned the queen of Navarre that Montmorency was disloyal to her friendship, and therefore deserved not her favour. But the impetuous sallies of his favourite provoked the king's laughter; and as all—excepting the duchess, the admiral de Brion, and his party—were unanimous in their desire thus to honour the preserver of France, the marshal de Montmorency received the sword of constable at the castle of Moulins, in the presence of the court.

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* Mezeray,—Abregé Chron.

The ceremonial was ordered in the following manner:—Early on the morning of Sunday, the 10th day of February, 1538, the marshal de Montmorency presented himself at the *lever* of the king, who then informed him, in the presence of the dauphin and the duke of Orleans, that it was his royal intention to elevate him to the dignity of constable. Montmorency uttered a few deprecatory observations, but finally gave the king humble thanks for the honour about to be conferred upon him. The procession then formed to proceed to the chapel—thus: First marched the Swiss guards, with drums and trumpets, preceding a troop of gentlemen of the court, arrayed in rich attire. Five knights of the order of St. Michael followed, wearing their mantles and collars. The two hundred gentlemen of the king's household walked next, armed with their battle-axes. Six heralds bearing their tabards, came next; then the king's chief equerry, Pommereul, bearing aloft the sword of state. The chancellor then walked alone, wearing his robes. Then followed the king, arrayed in his royal mantle, and marching between the cardinals de Lorraine and de Carpi. Next came the dauphin and his brother, attended by the cardinals de Givry, Le Veneur, du Bellay, and de Châtillon. Afterwards walked the marshal de Montmorency, wearing a robe of crimson velvet, very richly embroidered with gold thread. He led the queen of Navarre by the hand. Marguerite's train was borne by pages of honour, and she was attended by the duchesses de Vendôme and d'Estampes. Under a dais at the end of the great hall, hung with cloth of gold, a throne was set for the king; and upon a table close at hand, a fragment of the true cross was placed. The king took his seat on the throne, Marguerite standing at his right hand, and the two duchesses behind her. The chancellor summoned Montmorency to ascend the dais. The marshal kneeling, with his hand resting on the relic, then took the oaths of fidelity and allegiance. The sword of state was next handed to the king by the dauphin. Francis rose, and with his own hands girt the sword to Montmorency's side; he then drew it from its scabbard, and placed it in the marshal's hand. The new constable made a profound obeisance to the king and to the princes; the heralds waved their banners and exclaimed: "Vive de Montmorency, connétable de France!" and a shrill blast of trumpets proclaimed the news to the inhabitants of the town of Moulins. The king then descended from his throne, and preceded by the constable bearing the sword of state, repaired to the chapel to attend high mass. The ceremony terminated by a grand banquet, at which the king and the queen of Navarre dined together in public.* The emolument which Anne de Montmorency received from the high office bestowed upon him, amounted to the annual sum of 24,000 livres Tournois, exclusive of the vast patronage it conferred. He had now attained the summit of his ambition; for Francis had no greater honour to bestow than the sword of constable. Henceforth Montmorency, therefore, ceased to dissimulate; and the bigotry and rapacity of his character, now that there remained none whose favour it was advisable to conciliate, gradually revealed itself. The king confided to the new constable the supreme administration of the finances; so that Montmorency, chief of the army, leader of the court as grand-master, and director of the finances, exercised an influence little inferior to that of Francis himself. The constable's subordinates trembled at his frown; his words, though few, were sharp, and exasperating in import. A rigid disciplinarian, his severity was inexorable; and his decrees, when once pronounced, were, as far as it depended upon himself, unfailingly executed. Montmorency treated civilians of the middle classes, who were occasionally brought into contact with him, with scornful contempt. Brantôme† relates a very characteristic anecdote of the constable's arrogance. It happened that one day the president of one of the inferior legal courts in Paris, who had recently made his *début* in the capital, and therefore knew little of courtly ceremony, had occasion to present himself before the constable on some matter in discharge of his office. Montmorency received the president standing near a window, having doffed his cap, as the weather was then extremely hot. On the approach of the president, the constable said in his most indifferent tones: "Be good enough to make haste, M. le president, to say what you have to impart; you may resume your hat." The president, supposing that Montmorency stood bare-headed out of compliment to his dignity, replied: "Monseigneur, it is impossible that I can stand covered in your presence, unless you also will resume your hat." Montmorency steadily eyed the president, who shrank beneath his gaze; then with a smile of contempt, he rejoined: "M. le president, you must verily be a fool: do you suppose that I stand here uncovered out of regard or respect for you? Learn, my friend, that it is for my own convenience, as I am suffocating with heat. It seems that you imagine you are still presiding in your court, instead of standing in my presence. Cover your head, if so it pleases you, only speak." The unfortunate functionary was so confused with this rebuke, that, totally losing his presence of mind, he attempted a hurried statement of his errand. An authoritative wave of the constable's hand soon brought the president's address to a close. Montmorency had not comprehended a word; besides, in his judgment it was an unpardonable sin for a public officer to show so little readiness of speech and self-possession, and to quail beneath the glance of his superior. "As I told you before, M. le president, you are a complete fool!" exclaimed the constable, with angry vehemence. "Go now about your business, and come back here without fail to-morrow, and see if you can repeat what you have to say so as to be understood."

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

† Brantôme,—Eloge du Connetable Anne de Montmorency.

As the power of the queen of Navarre excited the jealousy, and gradually alienated the friendship of the constable de Montmorency, so did the forlorn position of queen Eleanor obtain for her his support and attachment. It gratified his vanity to protect the sister of the emperor, and to be appealed to by the queen on every occasion of moment. Eleanor also made Madame de Montmorency her *confidante*, and lived with her almost on terms of equality. The powerful influence of Madelaine de Savoye over her husband's mind was therefore exerted in favour of the forsaken queen, rather than to impress upon the constable's mind the extent of his obligations to the queen of Navarre, whose heretical opinions she viewed with horror and compassion.

During these transactions, pope Paul III. was actively negotiating to bring about the interview between the two sovereigns, which he hoped might insure the peace of Europe. Both the monarchs returned a favourable response to the proposal of the ambassador sent to their respective courts by the pope, and expressed their willingness to meet, provided Paul could propose a place for the interview which would be mutually acceptable. The pope immediately named the town of Nice, the only strong place which remained to the duke of Savoy; and despatched a chamberlain to request the duke's consent that the interview might there take place. The misfortunes of the duke of Savoy rendered him suspicious and wary; and he felt extreme reluctance to yield his only place of refuge to be garrisoned by French and Imperial troops, being doubtful whether it would ever be restored to him again. He therefore declined to give a positive answer to the papal envoy until he had consulted the emperor, to whom he despatched a gentleman named Rubat, praying his Imperial majesty to dispense with his acquiescence to the pope's proposal. The emperor, however, sent back word to the duke, that he desired to oblige his holiness, and therefore wished that the city of Nice might be placed for the time at the pontiff's disposal. The duke of Savoy, in despair at this decision, took the desperate measure of inciting the garrison of Nice to resist the fiat. He caused it to be rumoured that the emperor purposed to seize the town and county of Nice; to convey the prince of Piedmont into Spain, and to reduce the duke himself to the rank of one of his courtiers. The garrison therefore rose to arms to defend their duke; they closed the gates of Nice on the pope while he was in sight of the city, and refused to evacuate the town, so as to permit the introduction of foreign soldiers. Charles flew into a violent transport of passion when he learned that his orders had been disobeyed; but thought it prudent to seem pacified on hearing that Francis had despatched the constable de Montmorency on a private mission to Nice; as the king thought it a favourable moment to treat with the duke of Savoy, when the latter had thus drawn upon himself the indignation of the emperor and the pope.*

The most magnificent preparations were in progress throughout France for this interview, at which Francis resolved to display the pomp and luxury of his court. The equipages of queen Eleanor and the royal family were redecorated in the most sumptuous fashion, and fresh liveries were provided for the pages and running-footmen. The uniforms of the king's celebrated band of gentlemen-at-arms were also to be new for the occasion. The ladies of the court, and especially the young dauphiness, surpassed themselves in devising becoming attire, chains, and jewels for this occasion. An entry in the wardrobe-book of Francis I. tells us that the sum of "eleven thousand six hundred and ten livres seventeen sous was paid to Nicholas de Troyes, silversmith to the king, that he might deliver the same to one Galliot d'Allebrancques, a Florentine merchant, for payment of the pieces of silver, gold, and silken fabrics, and for fine embroideries in silver and gold thread for the adornment of divers cuffs and surcoats which the said merchant delivered during the past month of June to the said silversmith, to be converted into robes, surcoats, linings and edgings for Mesdames the dauphiness, and Marguerite de France, and other ladies and demoiselles of their train, to whom the king made free gift of the above, in order that they might appear more honourably attired during the contemplated interview between our holy father the pope, the emperor, and our lord the king."†

The pope, meantime, took up his abode, on being refused entrance into Nice, in the monastery of the Franciscans, situated in the suburbs of that city. The emperor arrived from Barcelona at Villefranche, a port close to Nice, two days after the pontiff, attended by a powerful fleet of twenty-eight galleys and three frigates, under the command of Andrea Doria. Charles had an immediate interview with the pope on his arrival at Villefranche: the conference took place in a small house, picturesquely situated, and overlooking the sea. After the space of a few days, the French court arrived at Villeneuve, another little town near to Nice. By the king's command, the town had been tastefully adorned for the reception of his magnificent court. The streets were hung with tapestry; and wreaths of evergreens and flowers formed a verdant canopy overhead, beneath which the processions of the court were to pass.

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* Guichenon,—Hist. de la Maison Royale de Savoie.

† Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

The king, after his arrival at Villeneuve, went to visit the pope. "Before the king marched six thousand lansknechts, in battle array, under the command of count Guillaume, who ranged themselves on the hill behind the pope's house," says an ancient chronicler, and eye-witness of these events.* "On this hill were stationed, besides, one thousand Provençal troops. Next marched the two hundred gentlemen of the king's household, followed by the princes, lords, dukes, counts, and barons of France, preceding the king, who was attended by his body-guard. My lords the cardinals, in attendance on the pope at his abode, being admonished of the approach of the king, set out to meet him in full canonicals, and mounted on their mules. The king severally embraced them all; when two of these very reverend lords, the cardinals Cibo and Cesarini, conducted him into the abode of the pope, where his majesty proffered homage to the holy father, who, however, refused to accept of it, but embraced the king with cordial joy. These ceremonies ended, the king presented my lords the dauphin and the duke of Orleans to the pope, who returned the compliment by introducing his two little nephews, cardinals elect. Meantime, great merriment and drinkings were going on outside, at the expense of the pope and the French cardinals, who kept open house for all comers."

The following day, which was Saturday the 8th of June, queen Eleanor, the queen of Navarre, and all the ladies of the court visited the pope. The queen journeyed by water from Villeneuve to Nice. On landing, Eleanor entered a sumptuous litter, covered with cloth of gold, and richly adorned inside with cords and tassels, and gold lace set with jewels. The trappings of the mules were of cloth of gold; the liveries of the pages and running-footmen were also of the same rich material, relieved by the queen's colours. The queen's equipage was followed by one conveying the dauphiness and the princess Marguerite. The equipage of the queen of Navarre followed. Marguerite rode alone in her litter, which was draped with black velvet; she was attired in mourning robes, which since the decease of Madame she had never laid aside. Black was a favourite costume with Marguerite;* it displayed the fairness of her complexion; besides, she agreed in the opinion of her deceased nephew, the dauphin Francis, who thought that black or violet were the only colours becoming to personages of royal condition. Marguerite de Vendôme, the affianced bride of the young duke de Nevers, rode immediately after the litter of the queen of Navarre, on a white palfrey splendidly caparisoned. The princess wore a flowing robe of cloth of gold, doubtless presented to her from the rich stuffs furnished to the princesses by the Florentine merchant Galliot, as Mademoiselle de Vendôme was an especial favourite with Francis. The duchesse d'Estampes followed, riding on a palfrey, and attired in the same style. The duchess on this occasion was suffered to take precedence of the consort of the constable, the severe and virtuous Madelaine de Savoye, who rode next. Then came the marquise de Rothelin, and the consort of the admiral de Brion, who was suffering from indisposition. Next rode forty maids of honour, mounted on palfreys, and robed in cloth of gold. Thirty-eight damsels of inferior rank, though noble, followed; these ladies were attired in crimson velvet. Following this cavalcade came a train of litters, covered with black velvet, which conveyed six of the most illustrious dowager peeresses of the court: the duchess de Longueville, and the countesses de Nevers, de Brionne, de Guercy, de Montpezat, and the maréchale de Châtillon, mistress of the robes to queen Eleanor. Afterwards rode the ladies in waiting on these noble ladies to the number of sixty personages. This equestrian procession was heralded by the 200 gentlemen of the household, who preceded the queen's litter, and by six knights of St. Michael, selected to perform the office of lords-in-waiting to Eleanor during the interview. When the pope was informed of the approach of this army of ladies, he despatched twenty-six cardinals, arrayed in their pontificals, to conduct the queen to the Franciscan monastery, where he was sojourning. The pope had caused a spacious but temporary chapel to be constructed in the garden of the monastery, and here he received Eleanor and her numerous train. The pope embraced the two queens and the principal ladies; and afterwards entered into familiar conversation with the ladies indiscriminately for upwards of an hour. A vesper bell then tolled, and as the queen expressed her wish to be present at prayers, the service was performed by Paul himself. The queen afterwards took her leave; the procession defiled as before, through the town of Nice to the harbour, where the ladies re-embarked, and arrived safely at Villeneuve between nine and ten o'clock in the evening.*

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* L'Embouchure de notre sainct père le pape, l'empereur, et le roy, faict à Nice, l'an MDXXXVIII.

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* In one of her manuscript poems the queen of Navarre expresses her sentiments thus:—

"Le noir souvent se porte pour plaisir,
Et plus souvent que pour peine et tourment,
Et pour estre vestu honnestement,
L'on doit avoir de le porter desir,

Puys que par mort me vient le desplaisir,
Il siet trop mieulx que nul accoustrement.
Le noir!

After these complimentary visits had been received and returned by the pope, the negotiations commenced. The two sovereigns suddenly assailed by secret umbrage, or perhaps fearful of committing themselves, steadily declined an interview, though each had journeyed to Nice expressly for the purpose of personal conference. The pope was the medium through which all communications passed; and Paul, who had so eagerly proffered his mediation to the monarchs in the certainty of success, while speaking slightingly of the diplomatic abilities of previous negotiators, discovered the innumerable difficulties which beset the often-discussed question of the duchy of Milan. "Nothing was seen during these days," says the ancient chronicler, "but embassies hastening at full speed to confer with the pope, the emperor, and the king; ships flitting about; artillery firing; embracings, feastings, complimenting amongst the Spaniards, French, and Italians. The emperor conferred with the pope, and so did the king also, in a house close to St. Laurents. The townsmen of Nice kept good watch on their ramparts; nor would they open more than two gates, one for the princes to enter, and the other for their departure from the city." On Tuesday the 11th of June, queen Eleanor paid a visit to her imperial brother at Villefranche. She was attended by the cardinal de Lorraine and by the constable de Montmorency. The same cavalcade of noble ladies accompanied her, riding in the same order as on their visit to the pope. The royal squadron consisted of seventeen galleys well mounted with guns. At the entrance of the port of Villefranche, Andrea Doria and the whole of the Imperial fleet sailed out to meet the French squadron, firing *feux-de-joie*, the Spaniards making the air echo again with acclamations when they descried queen Eleanor seated on the deck of her galley. Eleanor seems to have been much affected at the hearty welcome afforded her by her countrymen and at their enthusiasm. She still pined for Spain, for its cloistered palaces and melodious language; the levity of the French court was repulsive to her; and the little influence she possessed there was humiliating to her pride as an anointed sovereign, and a princess the eldest sister of the mighty emperor, and acknowledged by him in the direct line of succession to his sovereignties in case of failure of his own issue and that of his brother Ferdinand, king of the Romans. The duchess d'Estampes had the assurance to accompany Eleanor on this journey to meet her brother: she received a very courteous greeting from Charles; as the emperor, in consideration of the private services rendered to himself through the count de Longueval, thought it politic to overlook her delinquency in respect to his sister.*

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* MS. Bib. Royale, F. de Béth., 8557, f. 94.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Beth., No. 8557.

The queen of Navarre declined to visit the emperor, and remained with her brother at Villeneuve. At the court of Charles the queenly rank of Marguerite was not acknowledged, the kingdom of Navarre being considered incorporated with the Spanish dominions since its conquest by Ferdinand the Catholic. At those times when Charles found it necessary to be on terms of courtesy with Marguerite and her husband, he directs his ambassadors to pay their respect to the prince and princess of Béarn; and the Imperial envoys, whenever they mention Marguerite in their despatches, always give her that title. The queen consequently always refused to admit the ambassadors of the emperor to special audience during her sojourn in Paris. Moreover, Marguerite had not forgotten the uncourteous treatment she experienced during her sojourn at the court of Toledo; or the emperor's design of arresting and detaining her in prison until after the signature of the treaty of Madrid.

To facilitate the landing of queen Eleanor and her numerous train of ladies at Villefranche, the emperor caused a wooden pier to be constructed, so that the queen might step from her galley and land without entering a barge to row her ashore. As soon as the roar of artillery announced the queen's arrival, Charles, accompanied by the dukes of Savoy and of Mantua, and attended by a brilliant train of Spanish nobles, proceeded across the pier to hand his sister from her galley. The queen embraced her brother with great demonstration of affection; she then took his hand, and they were walking along the pier, when suddenly with a loud crash the bridge broke in the centre, and precipitated the emperor, the queen, the dukes of Savoy and Mantua, with many of their suite into the sea.*

The confusion was terrible; the frantic screams of the ladies at their sudden immersion, and of their more fortunate companions who had not yet disembarked, on perceiving their danger, echoed along the shore. The emperor and his sister were speedily rescued; "then," says a narrator of this catastrophe,† "you might have seen the gentlemen and nobles throw themselves valiantly into the sea to rescue the ladies, and bearing them above the water in their arms, convey them safely to the shore. Many of the gentlemen suffered immersion much higher than the waist; but as soon as the ladies arrived at the abode of the emperor, the cavaliers were furnished with shoes, stockings, and garments of every description, so that in a very short space of time all things assumed a joyous aspect." The queen and her brother conferred together for two hours; afterwards Eleanor and her noble train, with many a regretful farewell, re-embarked for Villeneuve under a royal salute fired from the French and Imperial squadrons. "Mons. mon bon frère," wrote the politic Charles in the letter which he then sent to the king, probably by the hand of Eleanor herself, "you will easily imagine the pleasure I have received from this visit of the very Christian queen Madame my dear sister, and also from that of the goodly and gallant company in her train. I desired of all things their longer stay in this part, a pleasure which I could not prevail upon my said sister to grant me, from her great eagerness to return to you. It seems to me needless therefore to write a longer letter on this occasion, as she will relate to you our discourse; only I thought I would send you two words to convey the affectionate remembrances of him who is, and will always remain, your good brother, cousin, and perfect friend, CHARLES."*

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8557.

† L'Embouchement de nostre sainct père le pape, l'empereur, et le roy faict à Nice. Brantôme.

After a fatiguing parley between the pope and the two monarchs, which lasted upwards of a week, Paul found it impossible to conclude a permanent peace; he had submitted to their consideration various proposals, which were rejected on that insurmountably difficult point, the investiture of the duchy of Milan. Paul then proposed that a truce for the space of ten years should be concluded, each belligerent party retaining the conquests achieved by his arms. Charles offered no objection to this proposition; while Francis, against the advice of the constable and of his most eminent generals, likewise signified his assent, on the understanding that the conferences should be immediately renewed at Rome, on the arrival there of the pope, for the ratification of a permanent peace. The party most aggrieved by this measure was the duke of Savoy, who found himself compelled, on the express fiat of his arbitrary protector the emperor, to sign the truce, which deprived him of his dominions for the space of ten years.* Charles despatched the chancellor Granvelle, and the king of France the cardinal de Lorraine and the constable, to ratify and swear to the truce in the presence of the pope, who himself administered the oaths in the chapel of the Franciscan monastery. Still the two monarchs refused to meet; accordingly queen Eleanor took another journey alone to Villefranche to take leave of her brother. This time she departed early in the morning, and spent a long day with the emperor. Charles distributed magnificent presents to the French courtiers; and regaled them at a splendid banquet, and afterwards with iced wines and liqueurs to their high gratification. The following day the Imperial court, always excepting the emperor, visited Francis at Villeneuve, where they received similar costly entertainment.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8487.

On the eve of Corpus Christi day, 1538, the pope embarked on board his galley to return to Italy. He was escorted by six French vessels of war as far as Savona. "When the venerable pontiff was on the point of departing, the people thronged to bid him farewell. He constantly stopped that the people might kiss his slipper, and tired not in giving his benediction; also, when he embarked on board his galley, the people marvelled as they perceived him, without sign of fatigue, continue to elevate his arms and bless the spectators. As the galleys issued from the port, the roaring of artillery from the ramparts and castle of Nice, and from all the ships of war in the harbour, with the blast of innumerable trumpets, hautboys, and cornets, created such a din, that it resembled nothing ever before heard."† When the papal squadron passed the port of Villefranche, the whole of the Imperial fleet, with the emperor on board, issued from the harbour, and accompanied the pope to Savona.

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* Guichenon. Mém de Du Bellay.

† Embouchement de nostre sainct père le pape, l'empereur, et le roy, etas.

Probably this unexpected mark of honour, which the venerable pontiff would have willingly dispensed with, made him glad of the protection afforded by the six French frigates.

The king, accompanied by queen Eleanor and the king and queen of Navarre, departed on the following day for Avignon, where the admiral had previously repaired with his consort, the countess De Brion, whose dangerous indisposition prevented her from participating in the festivities given at Villeneuve. Whilst Francis was sojourning here, news arrived that a terrible tempest had overtaken the Imperial fleet, which was making sail for Barcelona, after the emperor had escorted the pope as far as Savona; and that Charles was obliged to put into harbour at the Isle of St. Marguerite, on the coasts of Provence, to repair the damage done to his ships. The king instantly despatched a nobleman to convey a pressing invitation to the emperor to take shelter with his fleet in a more convenient harbour, giving him full assurance that the Imperial flag would everywhere meet with the same homage as his own. Charles hesitated; he desired a personal conference with the king; but his unpopularity, and, above all, the dreadful suspicion current throughout France, after the decease of the dauphin, rendered him cautious how he trusted himself in the dominions of his rival.

The stormy winds, however, blew with redoubled vigour, and the mariners of Doria's fleet feared to put to sea again during their prevalence. The emperor, therefore, in no little consternation, beheld himself weatherbound on the coast of France, in the presence of part of the French fleet, consisting of twenty-one vessels, under the command of the admiral de St. Blancard, which had sailed from the harbour of Marseilles to salute him. Barbarossa, the Turkish admiral, lay off the coasts of Italy, with his formidable fleet, ready, it was supposed—and as it subsequently appeared with truth—to execute any enterprise indicated by the French king. The emperor felt his danger; but to appear conscious of it, or to doubt the honour of Francis, could but conduce to make matters worse. With that tact and skill in adaptation to circumstances which so remarkably distinguishes Charles's political career, the emperor wrote to announce his anxious desire to land at Aigues-Mortes, in order to confer with Francis. His language, with its courtly smoothness and professions of regard, presents a strange contrast to the coarse abuse with which he had assailed Francis in the presence of the Consistory. "Mons. mon bon frère," wrote the emperor, on board his galleys off the Isle of St. Marguerite, "I find it difficult to express my thanks for the desire you so constantly manifest for our interview, and for the courteous message which the Sieur de Velly, and my own ambassador delivered from you, together with the more than fraternal offers you make me; of all which I shall avail myself according to circumstances, and as courteous friendship indicates; the which, causing me to hasten to the place where I hope we shall have the satisfaction of being together — an event we desire — induces me to postpone making greater mention here of my sentiments. It has, nevertheless, appeared desirable to me to despatch without delay the said lords, to impart to you the resolution we have arrived at together as to the said interview, and the time it is probable I shall be able to sail; also, to ascertain when you can arrive, which cannot be sooner than I desire. Your good brother, cousin, and ally, CHARLES." The emperor appends a postscript to his letter, to thank Francis for his diligent execution of the articles of the truce. He concludes the paragraph with a sentence which must have forcibly recalled to the king's mind the epistles he was in the habit of receiving from the emperor during his captivity in Madrid; indeed Charles, perhaps unconsciously, retraces the identical words in which many of them conclude. He says, speaking of his journey from the Isle of Marguerite to Aigues-Mortes: "It gives me real pain to be near you, and yet to have delayed so long in paying you a visit. Without fail, therefore, God helping me, I will depart from this place on Monday next, and on the following Tuesday meet you, when then, as ever, you will always find me your good friend and brother, CHARLES."*

Francis, after receiving this letter, and hearing the message sent by his ambassadors, took his departure for

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* Bib. Roy., Cabinet de Gaignières. MS. in fol. p. 48. Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

Aigues-Mortes. The emperor arrived there on Sunday, about three o'clock in the afternoon. As soon as the Imperial fleet anchored, Francis put off from shore in a barge, attended by few officers, to visit the emperor on board his galley. This step was taken by Francis without the sanction of the council, or, in fact, without having consulted any of his habitual advisers. The greatest consternation reigned throughout the court when it was known that the king, with rash imprudence, had placed himself, with his two sons, in the emperor's power. The movements of the squadron, which so greatly surpassed in strength the French fleet then in the Mediterranean, were suspiciously watched by the concourse of spectators, who, on the reported danger of the king, congregated on the beach, in momentary expectation of seeing the galleys of the emperor spread sail and make for the coasts of Spain. The only chance then of rescue for Francis would have been from the immediate sailing of the fleet under Barbarossa, to intercept and give battle to the Imperial galleys. The emperor could scarcely credit the fact when it was told him that the king of France and his sons were alongside his galley. He immediately hastened to receive them, and the most cordial greetings ensued, after which the two monarchs entered into familiar discourse. After so signal and gallant a mark of confidence on the part of the French monarch, Charles felt ashamed to harbour suspicion. The next day, therefore, he landed at Aigues-Mortes, and was received with great state by the king and queen Eleanor, who shed tears of joy when she witnessed the cordial embrace which the two monarchs bestowed upon each other when they met. The emperor remained the guest of the king until five o'clock on the following day, when he returned to his ship, accompanied by Francis and his sons, and the same evening Charles sailed for Barcelona.*

The character of this interview seems to have been merely friendly; and it passed without much political discussion. Charles sounded the king on the journey he afterwards took through France during the course of the following year, foreseeing its necessity from the disaffected attitude of his subjects of the Low Countries. He also promised to bestow the Milanese on the duke of Orleans within the space of three years, provided that prince espoused the daughter of Ferdinand, king of the Romans—an alliance very expedient for the duke. The king, who was always too prone to place implicit belief in the emperor's plausible words, expresses himself highly gratified at this interview: "I certify to you, that during the whole time that the emperor and myself spent together, not a single interruption occurred to our good-fellowship, or to disturb the happy and friendly conference which passed between us; so that we took leave of each other, feeling all the contentment and satisfaction possible. I can give you truthful assurance that no two princes ever felt more satisfied with each other's deportment than we do," wrote the king to his lieutenant at Lyons, immediately after the departure of the emperor from Aigues-Mortes. *

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* Sleidan,—Commentar. Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps. Brantôme,—Vie d'Andrea Doria.

Francis, on his return to the capital, caused the ratification of the truce to be celebrated with all kinds of public rejoicings and processions. During his brief sojourn at St. Germain-en-Laye, the court again became the scene of those festivities in which the king delighted. Marguerite spent the whole of the year 1539, at the court of France, and it was probably at this period that the conduct of the constable first inspired the queen with doubts as to the integrity of his friendship, and the manner in which he spoke of her to his royal master. The king of Navarre was more discontented than ever with Montmorency's deportment; he conceived that his interests had been wilfully overlooked by the constable at the conferences of Bourg, Leucate, Nice, and Aigues-Mortes. No mention had been there made of Henry's claim to the kingdom of Navarre; an omission which the king greatly resented, as it seemed to imply acquiescence on the part of Francis that Navarre should remain attached to the crown of Spain. It seems more than probable that Francis himself enlightened Marguerite as to the true nature of the constable's professions of regard. From the hour that the king elevated Montmorency to the highest office in the state, his regard for him diminished: the vast powers

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* Bibl. du Roi, MSS. de Colbert, fol. 252. Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

possessed by the constables of France invariably kindled distrust in the mind of the sovereign, and on the treasonable revolt of the constable de Bourbon, Francis vehemently declared that a power so obnoxious to the prerogatives of the crown should for ever be suppressed. The unbending character of Montmorency was little calculated to allay the jealous suspicion industriously infused into the king's mind by the duchess d'Estampes, who was the constable's mortal enemy. Montmorency expressed the greatest contempt for the frivolous and sordid duchess; her suspected correspondence with the emperor, through the count de Longueval, transported him with indignation, and, incorruptible himself, he had dared to denounce disloyal treason, even when the guilty party proved to be the powerful favourite herself. The representations made by Montmorency had not, however, succeeded in procuring the exile, or even the fall of the duchess from royal favour. The power possessed by Madame d'Estampes did not so much consist in the splendour of her beauty as in the fascinations of her wit, and in the dexterous manner with which she adapted herself to all the tastes of the king. In personal charms she was surpassed by many ladies of the court; but her manners, and even her slightest movements, were pre-eminently graceful. Her fastidiousness exceeded that of Francis himself; her habits were luxurious; and the sums she lavished to obtain rare and costly articles of attire, so as to be the first to introduce them at court, proved a fruitful theme of reproach for the frugal Montmorency, who often, when warlike movements of vital importance to the kingdom were suspended for want of funds, discovered that large sums had been drawn from the exchequer to supply the extravagant demands of the duchess. Madame d'Estampes ruled the imperious Francis by artful tears and submissive deference to his commands, until a favourable opportunity occurred to gain her own desires; she treated the queen with humble respect, and assiduously paid her court to the queen of Navarre. The dauphin, after his return from Piedmont, openly acknowledged his *liaison* with Diane de Poitiers, duchess de Valentinois, and the court was torn by the factions of these two women, reigning with almost despotic power over the king and the heir-apparent of France. Each of the two duchesses had their adherents; and the feuds of Mesdames d'Estampes and de Valentinois soon acquired almost a greater importance in the state than the political intrigues of the emperor himself. The constable de Montmorency imprudently declared himself a partisan of the beautiful duchess de Valentinois, whose generous spirit offered favourable contrast to the artifice and frivolity of her rival in power. This preference greatly exasperated Francis, whose jealousy of his son was notorious, and who failed not to imbibe the malicious suggestion of his favourite, that the constable's friendship for Diane de Poitiers arose from a desire to ingratiate himself with the heir-apparent. To balance the ill offices rendered him by Madame d'Estampes, Montmorency had need of Marguerite's friendship and support; and so long as the queen's favour failed him not, the duchess found her efforts to overthrow the constable invariably frustrated. Montmorency, whose career of good fortune had never met with a check, conceived himself to be above conciliating enemies whom he despised: in the presumption inspired by his elevation, he disregarded the symptoms of alienation manifested by the deportment of Francis, in the midst of the honours which he lavished on the subject who had so successfully repulsed the invasion of the emperor. Constable, grand master, minister of finance, and chief counsellor to queen Eleanor, Montmorency, at the summit of riches, honour, and prosperity, perceived but one strong influence paramount to his own over the mind of the king. If the favour of the queen of Navarre could be overthrown, and the king persuaded to break the bonds which had so long united him to his sister, the constable felt assured that no rival would share with him the real confidence of his sovereign; for Montmorency estimated at its true worth the degree of influence exercised over Francis by the duchesse d'Estampes. The encouragement which Marguerite afforded to the "sectarian teachers" was a crime of the deepest dye in the eyes of the severe and dictatorial Montmorency. She had offended against the laws of the realm which proscribed the ministers and their doctrine. Montmorency would fain have seen transferred to the legal tribunals of France the same power of summary punishment which he exercised in the camp. At home, the intolerant counsels of his consort Madelaine de Savoye, continually excited the zeal of the constable. The sternest bigots of the universities found a warm welcome and even edification in the converse of Madame la connétable, while she entertained them with princely hospitality in the palace of the Montmorency in Paris, or at her husband's noble residence of Chantilly. In the presence of Montmorency, who was believed to be at the summit of royal favour, the cardinal de Tournon, and other turbulent churchmen, continually alluded to the sacrifice of earthly obligations as a deed most pleasant and meritorious in the sight of God, when it was perpetrated for the honour and the glory of the faith.

Montmorency, however, little imagined the contrary effect his insinuations respecting queen Marguerite's conduct exercised on the king's mind: as long as Francis had no cause of complaint against the constable, he laughed at and evaded the charges preferred against his sister. Now, however, they assumed an offensive aspect in his eyes. It is probable that the king communicated his displeasure at the conduct of the constable to his sister about this period. It excited great sorrow and surprise in the mind of Marguerite to learn that one whom she had so favoured and trusted, could be guilty of the ingratitude attributed to him. Many warnings of the constable's faithlessness had the queen received: the university, by its orator, had publicly charged Montmorency with disloyalty to his patroness; the duchess d'Estampes repeatedly reiterated her conviction of his treachery; yet Marguerite, with generous trust in professions so positive as the constable's, refused to believe. An historian* speaking of the perfidious defection of de Montmorency, which he designates "*une ingratitude scythique,*" says, "there were found those base enough, who, after being entertained from childhood in the household of the queen of Navarre, and elevated by her influence to the highest honours and dignities, did all they could in secret to make her incur the displeasure and hatred of the king her brother, and of the king of Navarre, her husband." One day the king happened to be conversing with the constable on the progress of heresy, and on the future measures which it would be expedient to pursue to effect its suppression. Montmorency, unconscious of the change wrought in the king's mind respecting him, ventured to respond in his usual dictatorial accents, "that if his majesty were indeed sincere in his wish to exterminate heresy from his realm, he must begin by reforming his court, and forcibly repressing its exercise amongst those most nearly allied to him; and especially it behoved him to commence by making a salutary example of the queen of Navarre his sister." Francis abruptly replied, "Oh! as for my sister, I will not have her name mentioned. She loves me too faithfully to believe a creed which I do not believe; nor will she ever embrace a faith prejudicial to the welfare of my realm."* The constable's words were immediately reported to the queen of Navarre, doubtless by the king himself. Marguerite could no longer affect to disbelieve what had so often been told her respecting the secret animosity of one, who owed her so deep a debt of gratitude. "From that moment," says Brantôme, "the queen never liked M. le connestable more; and her displeasure greatly contributed to procure his disgrace and subsequent banishment from court."† It does not appear that Marguerite indicated her displeasure by any signal act of alienation. Her frequent correspondence with Montmorency ceases during the year 1538; and she never subsequently alludes to him in her letters to Francis, or to others. When Marguerite withdrew her patronage, and no longer mentioned his name with favour to the king, the constable soon discovered whose had been the hand which supported him in the good graces of the sovereign, and defeated the intrigues of Madame d'Estampes. All these events, however, were forgotten for the time, by the sudden and dangerous illness of the king, who for more than a month lay, as it was supposed, at the point of death. The malady of Francis was an internal ulcer of a most malignant description;‡ and his sufferings were intense. The king's health after his illness at Madrid, never recovered its former vigour; and the letters subsequently written by his mother and sister, are filled with allusions to indispositions, which, though temporary, appear often to have been severe. The court was at Compiègne when the king fell ill. Marguerite remained with her brother; and lavished upon him the tender cares which before had so greatly conduced to his recovery. The precarious condition of the king's health allayed for a season the virulence of the hostile factions of Madame d'Estampes, and the duchess de Valentinois. The assiduity which the constable displayed at this season to recommend himself to the favour of the young dauphin was remarked with indignation by the queen of Navarre, and contributed greatly to increase her alienation.

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* Sainte Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre de l'Incomparable Marguerite.

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* Brantôme,—Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

† Brantôme,—Dames Illustres.

‡ Mezeray. Brantôme.

The king was slowly recovering his strength, when ambassadors arrived at Compiègne from the emperor, the bearers of his verbal promise to bestow the Milanese on the duke of Orleans; and to prefer in Charles's name the most singular and unexpected request, that Francis would suffer him to pass through his realm, to repress in person the revolt of the town of Ghent. The Flemings were the richest, as well as the most turbulent of the emperor's subjects. The maintenance to the letter of their ancient charters and privileges was the condition of their obedience to the ruling powers: the slightest infringement of these immunities roused the democratic spirit, ever ready to manifest itself, which pervaded the vast trade corporations of the wealthy towns of Flanders. The sturdy and independent burghers of Bruges, Ghent, and Liège, were always ready to resort to arms for the preservation of their privileges, and the defence of their commerce. In vain the princes of the House of Burgundy had punished by rigorous edicts the frequent bloody outbreaks and insubordination displayed by the Gantois; the municipal corps, and the guilds with their wonderful organization and immense wealth, still rose to repel the oppressions of their rulers.

The utter exhaustion of the Imperial treasury after the emperor's retreat from Provence, compelled the regent of the Low Countries to assemble the states of Flanders, and to request extraordinary aid to repair the disastrous condition of the finances. The states responded with seeming alacrity to this demand, and voted queen Mary a gratuity of twelve hundred thousand florins. The queen, therefore, proceeded to apportion the amount which each town throughout Flanders was respectively to subscribe towards this fund; and she laid the contribution of the Gantois at 400,000 florins. This sum was not exorbitant, considering the wealth of the citizens; nevertheless, as it was specified in their charter that no taxes should be levied without their previous assent, the inhabitants of Ghent refused to submit to the impost, and appealed to the emperor. Charles confirmed his sister's *ordonnance;* and ordered the tax to be levied without delay. The Gantois immediately rose to arms; they killed some of the Imperial commissioners while attempting to perform their duty, and expelling the rest from the town, they closed their gates, and openly defied the efforts of the regent to restore order. In a tumultuous assembly of the citizens, which recalled the days of the famous Van Arteveldc, it was resolved to implore the protection of the king of France: deputies were accordingly sent to Paris to lay at the feet of Francis the allegiance of the factious Gantois; and to offer, as the price of the succour they earnestly implored, to render him master of the Low Countries. Liège and Namur already manifested symptoms of wavering in their allegiance to Charles; and the imminent peril which menaced the ruling power, kindled the keenest disquietude in the bosom of the emperor.

The deputies of the Gantois were received by Francis; but contrary to their expectation, and to the hopes held out to them by Madame d'Estampes, whose favour the ambassadors had been instructed to conciliate, the king not only declined to aid the emperor's revolted subjects, but instantly caused their overtures to be communicated to the Imperial envoy, resident at his court. The king at this period had it in his power by accepting the overtures of the Gantois, to exact signal compensation for the emperor's detention of the Milanese; and it was to guard against this possibility that Charles so skilfully adapted his discourse at the interview at Aigues-Mortes, so as completely to delude the king, and to confirm him in his resolve of abandoning the revolted Flemings to the mercy of their incensed sovereign.

The refusal of Francis to countenance their rebellion, far from intimidating the Gantois, seemed but to incite them to fresh acts of defiance. They seized several castles in the neighbourhood of Ghent; and their emissaries penetrated throughout the Netherlands, exhorting the population to take arms and avenge themselves, by deposing the emperor Charles from his sovereignty, upon a House notorious for its extortion and cruelty. Affairs at length grew so desperate, that queen Mary, in alarm, summoned the emperor from his retirement at Toledo to put down a sedition which defied her efforts to appease. The grand difficulty was for the emperor to reach the Netherlands in safety, as grave perils beset the three routes open to him. The rebels had made themselves masters of the ports of Flanders; besides the emperor feared that a tempest or contrary winds might cast him on the English coasts if he attempted to sail from Barcelona to Antwerp. If he traversed Germany, the hostile attitude of the Protestant princes, through whose territories his route lay, menaced his liberty. His third alternative was to demand a passage through France; and Charles, by adopting this course, signally proclaimed his belief in the honour and loyal integrity of his rival. The chivalrous spirit of the king responded with enthusiasm to the proposal made him by the emperor; it accorded with the frank fearlessness of his temper; while it exemplifies as strongly the mean disposition of the emperor, whose penetration was seldom at fault in reading character, and who invariably took advantage of Francis in every possible manner.

The king therefore signified to the Imperial ambassadors his consent and pleasure at the proposed journey of the emperor through France; though feeble and unable to rise from his couch, he wrote a letter to Charles, the concluding paragraph of which is as follows: "I wish to assure you, Mons. mon bon frère, by this letter signed by my own hand, and by my honour and faith as a prince and your good brother, that when you pass through my kingdom, the same honours, reception, and loyal treatment shall be accorded to you as I receive myself: in short, if it pleases you to signify to me the precise time of your journey, I will meet you within your own dominions with my children, who are ready to obey you and to accompany you hither into this kingdom, of which you may dispose as your own."* Charles therefore hesitated no longer, but commenced immediate preparations for his journey.

Very opposite to the delight expressed by the king, were the sensations excited in the French privy council when Francis communicated the approaching visit of the emperor. The dauphin, the cardinals de Tournon and de Lorraine, urgently advised the king to take the opportunity to compel Charles to grant the investiture of the Milanese to the duke of Orleans, and to annul the treaties of Madrid and Cambray during his visit to the capital. Montmorency almost alone opined that perfect freedom should be granted the emperor, leaving it to Charles's sense of gratitude to perform the solemn promise he had made to the king through his ambassadors. There is reason to suppose, also, that the king of Navarre joined the dauphin in his hostile designs against the emperor; but we possess no insight into Marguerite's opinion on the matter to lead to a decision whether her husband acted according to her wish and advice. Marguerite very profoundly detested the emperor; of whose insincerity and meanness of character she had had painful proof.

In order completely to reassure the emperor, Francis despatched his two sons to meet Charles, and escort him into France. On the 25th of November, the duke of Orleans entered the town of Orleans, attended by from twelve to fifteen princes and nobles, who were all attired in violet satin, on his way to receive the emperor at St. Sebastian. Eight days later the dauphin arrived, escorted by twenty-five noblemen arrayed in white satin habits splendidly embroidered, and passed through the town of Orléans, travelling post to St. Jean-de-Luz to meet the emperor.† Montmorency accompanied the dauphin. When the emperor arrived at St. Jean-de-Luz, the constable, as he had been instructed by his royal master, declared "that the king offered his sons as hostages to the emperor, as a guarantee that the safe conduct granted to him would be held inviolable." The emperor replied, in courtly parlance: "I accept with all my heart the loyal offer made me by the king my brother of the two princes my cousins; I receive it not, however, to send them as hostages into Spain, but to retain them with me as my travelling companions and friends."*

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* Bibl. Royale, MSS. de Béth., No. 8587. Capefigue,—Hist. de François I.

† Godefroy,—Grand Cérémonial de France.

The towns of Bayonne and Bordeaux gave Charles a magnificent reception. When the emperor entered a town, the authorities came to meet and to present him with the keys of their city; and as long as he sojourned there he exercised sovereign jurisdiction in remitting capital punishments and in releasing criminals and debtors from prison. At Verteuil, the magnificent palace of the count de la Rochefoucauld, Charles was royally received and entertained by the count's mother, Anne de Polignac; and so satisfied and flattered did the emperor feel at the heartiness of his reception, that on departing he exclaimed, "that never had he before honoured any subject with his presence who displayed so just an appreciation of his excellent dignity as the countess de la Rochefoucauld."† From Verteuil Charles proceeded to Lusignan; in the afternoon he took diversion there by hunting deer in the park for upwards of an hour, riding at surprising speed in pursuit armed with a short spear. Early the following morning the emperor continued his route towards Poitiers. As the cavalcade proceeded, small birds, such as jays and magpies, were let loose at intervals by the Sieur de Sansac that the emperor might take recreation by shooting at them with an arquebuse, for Charles was fond of displaying his skill as a marksman. The Sieur de Sansac likewise, had a great number of hawks and other birds of prey from the royal *volerie* intrusted to him, which he occasionally let fly. This sport greatly delighted the emperor; and when he was in high good-humour he often asked the Sieur de Sansac, in a tone considered politically significant by the bystanders, "*s'ils voleroient le Milan.*"‡

The preparations for the entry of the emperor into the town of Poitiers were most sumptuous. The duke de la Trimouille, governor of Poitou, accompanied by his sons, the prince de Talmond and the count de Benon, with a suite of five hundred gentlemen, met the Imperial *cortège* a league from the town. Two thousand citizens of Poitiers, attired in velvet adorned with rich *passementerie* of gold and silver, followed the governor and his train. The guilds and corporations of the town walked next in procession, displaying their banners and ensigns; each one of these, to produce a novel effect, was embroidered with a text from Scripture, in sense that might be construed more or less complimentary to the emperor. Charles entered Poitiers by the ancient gate called La Tranchée; over the archway the royal arms of France and Spain were splendidly blazoned, surrounded by the Orders of the respective monarchs. The emperor was received on his entrance into the town beneath a canopy of state composed of cloth of gold, and violet velvet *mipartie*, which was borne by the mayor of Poitiers and three town magistrates. The civic dignitaries wore black satin robes.

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* Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

† Ibid.

‡ Ibid. *Milan* signifies in the French language, a kite, and hence the emperor's *jeu de mots*.

The day, meantime, began to draw to a close before the emperor had finished receiving the addresses of the various corporate bodies; and when the procession resumed its march, the streets were brilliantly illumined, each householder having been previously directed to provide a torch of wax of the weight of a pound and a half, which he was ordered to affix over his door, and to light at a given hour. When the cavalcade reached the cathedral the emperor was received with great state by the clergy of the diocese; while the church itself seemed a mass of flame, so numerous were the torches which covered it from tower to base. The emperor's lodging had been prepared in the episcopal palace close by; and Charles being greatly fatigued, then gladly dismissed his *cortège* and retired. The decorations of the emperor's bedchamber and retiring room were very sumptuous, having been lent for the purpose by the duke de la Trimouille. The bedchamber was hung with satin draperies embroidered with figures and devices in gold. The bed was valued at the sum of 6,000 livres; it was very richly gilt, and otherwise ornamented with draperies, and gold cord and tassels. Beyond were seven other chambers, every one as richly furnished by the duke de la Trimouille for the dauphin, his brother, and for the occupation of the principal French and Spanish lords in waiting. A very sumptuous supper had been provided for the emperor; but Charles, already oppressed with ceremony, declined to place himself at table, and supped privately in his own apartment, taking only jelly and sweetmeats by way of refreshment, and drinking vin de Beaune.*

By seven o'clock the following morning, the same concourse of personages thronged to the episcopal palace to take leave of the emperor, and to present him a gift from the town of Poitiers. This was a grand piece of plate, silver gilt, representing a high rock ornamented with herbage, and wreaths of flowers of very excellent workmanship. On the summit of the rock an eagle stood; close by was a lily, the graceful flowers of which clustered around in abundant profusion. On the base of the rock this inscription was engraved: "*Ex omnibus floribus mundi elegi lilium unum.*" Charles evinced the highest satisfaction at this complimentary offering, despite the implied superiority claimed in the motto for the Gallic lily over his eagle. He laid his hand on his heart, and replied in answer to the oration spoken by the mayor of Poitiers in behalf of his townsmen: "*Je remercie la ville; j'accepte son présent, et m'en souviendray bien.*"†

The king, meanwhile, accompanied by queen Eleanor, by the king and queen of Navarre, the princess Marguerite, the dauphiness, and the cardinal de Lorraine, arrived at Orleans on the 5th day of December. The condition of the king's health continued to excite great uneasiness. His malady was pronounced temporarily subdued; but the severe suffering he had endured, and which Francis still felt at intervals, showed with lamentable distinctness on his habits and constitution. Even the excitement attending the emperor's triumphal progress failed at times to inspire Francis with energy; Marguerite's society seemed more necessary than ever to the king; and it was she alone who could rouse him from the fits of mournful abstraction which cast gloom over the court.

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* Godefroy,—Cérém. de France.

† Ibid, t. ii., p. 755.

A peculiar melancholy hangs over these the closing years of the reign of Francis I.—a reign which opened with such dazzling splendour. The ministers and courtiers of Louis XII., men of that king's mature age and standing, seem to bear no part in the reign of his successor, but disappear from the scene when the tomb closed over that best of monarchs. When Francis I. ascended the throne never was there before seen at court such an assemblage of gallant cavaliers, the majority of the same age as their royal master, and all, with few exceptions, chieftains of the princely aristocracy of France. All then was brilliant, vigorous, loyal; the noblest maidens in France adorned the court, in attendance on their gentle mistress, queen Claude, or enrolled in the train of the magnificent Louise de Savoye; or in that—a position coveted by all—of the witty and sprightly duchess d'Alençon. Learning flourished; and the luxury of the court of France, its chivalry, festivals, and pageants, was the wonder and admiration of Europe. The court now presented a different aspect; many of those brave and joyous cavaliers slept in the warrior's grave; others, broken in health from wounds or diplomatic labour, were prematurely aged. Queen Claude, the loved yet neglected consort of the king, lay entombed in the dreary vaults of St. Denis; and in her place a princess reigned who was regarded by Francis with feelings of positive aversion. The eldest son of the king, that fair young dauphin whose baptism was celebrated with princely pomp at Amboise, during the palmy days of his father's reign, had likewise disappeared. Bourbon, the early friend and companion in arms of the king, had traitorously betrayed his master; so that the peerage of the elder branch of Bourbon was extinct; and by a just judgment its escutcheon had been defaced: the motto of that royal house, almost prophetic in its import, had been accomplished—"*à toujours et jamais.*" To add to the king's chagrins, Montmorency, the favoured courtier who had been elevated to the pinnacle of honour, proved unfaithful. The king's confidence, moreover, had been violated by a treacherous mistress, whose arts he had neither inclination nor energy to resist, and whom he yet cherished, though he believed she had betrayed him to his hereditary foe. Marguerite, the king's faithful and loving sister, alone remained true: yet she, also, betook herself from a court but the phantom of the former one; and Marguerite had laid aside her brilliant attire, while her mourning robes constantly reminded the king that his power also had not sufficed to shield from sorrow one so greatly beloved.

The king, who since his illness found exertion irksome, retired with his sister and the court to Amboise, and remained there until such time as news reached him of the emperor's approach. The king then accompanied the queen back again to Orleans, and leaving her in that city, he set off to meet Charles. The two monarchs met at Loches, and embraced each other tenderly, to the great edification of the spectators at the gates of the town. The archway of this gate was richly decorated with various heraldic devices, the most conspicuous of which were a salamander, surrounded by the motto of Francis—" *Nutrisco et extinguo*, and a phœnix, which was the badge of queen Eleanor, with her device, " *Unica semper avis*. When the princes met, the salamander began to vomit flames, and the phœnix burned gradually away.[*] The king conducted Charles to Cléry, where the royal party met with sumptuous entertainment from the dean and chapter of Nôtre Dame de Cléry, the famous cathedral foundation of Louis XI.

Early the following morning, which was the twentieth day of December, 1539, great preparations were commenced for the reception of the emperor in the ancient town of Orleans, where queen Eleanor and her court awaited. The processions commanded by Francis were imposing, and of such magnitude that it took them from sunrise to nightfall to defile through the town. The militia of the province was called to arms, and posted in various parts of the town, to serve as a guard of honour wherever the emperor appeared. It was divided into five divisions, each commanded by a valiant captain. There were 14,768 pikemen; 9,340 halberdiers; 11,580 arquebusiers.[†] All the chief gentlemen of the Orleannois, by command of the king, assembled to the number of 454, to accompany the governor of Orleans when he went out to meet the emperor. Next rode ninety-two of the children of the principal merchants of the town. This cavalcade especially attracted the admiration of the emperor, who never ceased lauding the gallant bearing of these young horsemen. They were mounted on bay coloured chargers, and were attired alike, in habits of black velvet, with doublets of rich white satin, fastened at the bosom with studs of gold. Their caps were adorned with strings of jewels and embroidery of gold; and they wore white morocco boots, and gold spurs. This gallant company was preceded by a standard-bearer, carrying aloft a banner emblazoned with the arms of the town, and embroidered with the motto: "*Prenez en gré.* Numerous bands with banners and emblems followed; indeed, every profession, trade, and calling, had its representatives in this endless procession. When the municipality found itself in the presence of the emperor, the high-bailiff stepped forward and pronounced an harangue of a highly complimentary character. The emperor responded in a speech of some length: "Mons. le baillif," said he, "it is not now alone, nor is this the first place, in which I have been made sensible of the great honours which it has pleased the king, my brother, to command his subjects to bestow upon me. This gives me convincing proof of the friendship he bears me, which is so reciprocal between us, that from henceforth there will be peace and eternal concord between the king, his children, and myself. I protest to you, Monsieur le baillif, that in nothing will I trouble this cordial union, *et dites luy que voire.*" In pronouncing these last words, Charles appeared much affected, and placed his hand on his heart.

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[*] Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

[†] Ibid. Godefroy.

The procession then proceeded; and at length the emperor, about three o'clock in the afternoon, reached the gate of the town, where he was received by the king, who had purposely preceded him. The progress of Francis and his imperial guest through the town of Orleans was "marvellously triumphant." Charles declined, however, to ride beneath the canopy of state prepared for him, and reiterated his refusal to do so several times. The cavalcade, as it defiled, was received with acclamations by the militia bands, amidst great flourishes of trumpets and kettledrums. The emperor alighted at the church of Ste. Croix, where he was received by the bishop of Orleans and his clergy in full canonicals. Charles adored the fragment of the true cross, which was exposed in a reliquary of great value on the high altar; and after passing some minutes in private prayer, he returned to the porch of the cathedral, and remounting his horse, proceeded to the cloister of St. Aignan, where the royal family always resided during their sojourn in Orléans. The emperor passed under an arcade of flowers and foliage, most skilfully wreathed, which led to the apartments prepared for him. Singing birds were artfully concealed amidst this leafy bower, and made most melodious warbling. As soon as the king had taken his leave, supper was served for the emperor; but Charles, notwithstanding his fatigue, declined, as at Poitiers, to partake of anything more substantial than some sweetmeats, and a draught of strong vin d'Orleans. After an interval, during which the emperor reposed, while his attendants feasted, the king returned, accompanied by the dauphin and the duke d'Angoulême, to conduct Charles to visit queen Eleanor, who was anxiously expecting him. Marguerite, and all the princesses and ladies of the court were assembled in the queen's apartments to receive the emperor. After the excessive fatigue and excitement of the day, it was a trying ordeal for the emperor to appear in the presence of the brilliant dames of Eleanor's court, to respond gracefully to their compliments, and above all to renew his acquaintance with the queen of Navarre, whom he had not met since Marguerite took so summary a farewell of him in the city of Toledo.

The following day, which was Sunday, December the 21st, a great concourse of people, soldiers and citizens, came to St. Aignan, very early in the morning, to salute the emperor and the king, by shouts, cheers, and discharges of musketry, before they rose. The municipality next appeared, to offer a rich cupboard of plate to the emperor, of the value of 8,000 livres, as a present from the town. This ceremony concluded by eight o'clock, when the king and his imperial guest attended mass in the chapel of Ste. Michelle, before quitting Orleans for Arthenay, where they were to pass the night, on their road to the royal castle of Amboise. The emperor was escorted for two leagues on his road to Arthenay by the bands of militia-men; and, when they took leave to return home, the arquebusiers simultaneously discharged their arquebuses as a parting salute.*

Queen Eleanor, with Marguerite and the princesses, quitted Orleans during the afternoon of the same day, and travelled to Amboise, without reposing at any intermediate place. Before the queen's departure, the mayor of Orleans and twelve municipal officers waited on Eleanor to take leave. The queen received them in state, sitting under a royal canopy. Queen Marguerite occupied a chair by her side, and the dauphiness and the princess Marguerite were likewise present. The queen bowed her thanks for the complimentary address of the town authorities; but the queen of Navarre rose from her chair, and addressing the mayor said, with great dignity, "that she had been commissioned by the king her royal brother to thank them in his name, and to signify that his majesty was satisfied with the loyal homage of his good town of Orleans."†

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* Godefroy,—Grand Cérém. de France.

† Ibid.

CHAPTER IX.

Apprehensions displayed by the emperor amidst the honours lavished upon him—Presentation of the duchess d'Estampes to the emperor—Dread which the emperor felt of the hostility of queen Marguerite—Accidents which befell the emperor at Amboise—Charles enters Paris—Grand banquet at the Palais—Present of the municipality to the emperor—Project of the dauphin to arrest Charles at Chantilly—Remonstrances of the constable—Fears of the emperor—His reply to the proposals made by the king relative to the cession of the Milanese—Francis and the emperor visit St. Denis—Departure of the emperor from France—He denies his verbal engagements to king Francis—His successful repression of the revolt of the Gantois—Alteration in the character of king Francis—Impeachment of the admiral de Brion—The king rejects the intercession of the duchess d'Estampes—Sentence pronounced on the admiral—His interview with the king—Francis revokes the sentence and re-establishes the admiral in his dignities—Arrival of the duke of Cleves at the court of France—Francis bestows upon him the hand of the princess Jeanne de Navarre—His reasons for this step—Discontent of the princess—She dislikes her residence at Plessis-les-Tours—Sanction given by the queen of Navarre to the suit of the duke of Cleves—The alliance disliked by the king of Navarre—Aversion shown by the princess for the marriage proposed to her—She beseeches her uncle to excuse her from accepting the duke's proposals—Anger of king Francis at this opposition—Consternation of queen Marguerite—Her letter to the king—Firmness displayed by the young princess—Marguerite attempts to compel her daughter's obedience—King Francis commands that the ceremony of the betrothment of the princess Jane and the duke of Cleves shall be proceeded with—Protests made by the princess—Her marriage at Chatelherault—Public affront offered to the constable—Marguerite's observation on the subject—Fêtes given in honour of Jane's marriage—The disgrace of the constable de Montmorency—Marguerite and her husband retire into Béarn—Decease of the bishop of Oleron—The king and queen of Navarre request the nomination of Roussel to the vacant see—They obtain their suit from the pope—The preaching of Roussel—Turbulent deportment of the bishop of Condom—His enmity to queen Marguerite—His adherents conspire against the life of the queen—Her letters to the king on the subject—The king nominates commissioners to investigate the charges preferred against the bishop—His alleged attempt to poison queen Marguerite—Arrest of sundry delinquents by order of the king of Navarre—Marguerite hears mass on Christmas Day from her bed—Her letter to Izernay, steward of the household to the princess Jeanne—Investigations are continued connected with the crime of the bishop of Condom—Condemnation of one of the prisoners—The queen solicits and obtains his pardon—Translation of Erard de Grossoles from the see of Condom to that of Blois—Fears excited in Europe by the apparent amity existing between the emperor and king Francis—Embassy of Rincone and Fregosa—Assassination of the ambassadors—Letter written by queen Marguerite to her brother.

Amidst the honours lavished on the emperor during his magnificent progress through France, the keenest disquietude was often visible on his countenance. The cordial reception given him by Francis, and the acclamations with which he was saluted by the French, failed to reassure him; for, conscious that his own secret purposes seldom corresponded with the sentiments he expressed, the emperor could not believe in the genuine enthusiasm of a nation which he had so deeply injured. The most trifling occurrences excited his apprehension; and with gloomy suspicion, the eyes of Charles glanced often on the well trained bands selected to form his guard of honour. If any accidental confusion occurred in the order of procession, the evident anxiety displayed by the emperor showed that he dreaded a popular outbreak, either spontaneously on the part of the people, or a tumult skilfully excited by the government to avenge its wrongs by some deed of violence directed against his person. The king, whose intentions towards his imperial guest were loyal and honourable, took a mischievous delight in augmenting the very evident fear displayed by the emperor, by recounting to him the arguments used by the privy council in favour of his detention in France, until he had annulled the treaties of Madrid and Cambray, and bestowed the investiture of Milan on the duke of Orleans. Francis, likewise, perpetually alluded in a jesting manner to the rigour displayed towards him during his captivity in Spain; and to the cruel treatment experienced there by the young princes. Charles did not understand jests; and the words of the king created the most profound uneasiness in his mind. When the emperor first found himself, while at Orleans, in the presence of the queen and her brilliant court, the duchesse d'Estampes stood in the circle at some little distance from her royal mistress. Francis directed the emperor's glance towards the beautiful favourite, saying: "Mon frère, you perceive that lady? well, she counsels me not to let you depart until you have granted the modification of the treaty of Madrid, which we have so often asked!" This was rather a startling announcement to the emperor; but presently recovering his usual self-possession, Charles affected to take the king's words in jest, and replied evasively, with a profound obeisance to the duchess: "Then wherefore, sire, do you hesitate to take such good advice?"* Afterwards, however, it is recorded, that he attempted to propitiate the duchess by presenting her with a magnificent diamond; but if this gift were made at all, Charles added but another bribe direct from his imperial hand, to the many he had previously sent to the duchess through the count de Longueval.

In his intercourse with the queen of Navarre, Charles had greater need for caution than with Madame d'Estampes, of whose faithlessness and frivolity he had had many proofs. There existed many reasons for the undisguised dislike which Marguerite bore the emperor. Charles refused her the title of majesty; and declined to make restitution to the House of Albret of the crown of Navarre usurped by his grandfather, Ferdinand the Catholic. The queen, also, cherished suspicions relative to the decease of the dauphin Francis, which rendered the presence of the emperor at court repulsive to her. Brantôme relates that queen Marguerite frequently taunted the emperor during his sojourn in France, with the discourteous treatment she received while at the court of Toledo. "This queen did not content herself alone with writing to the emperor her opinion of his intended injurious treatment, but she waged him a good war on the subject when he passed through France."* Charles, whose conscience testified how little he deserved to meet with friendship at the hands of the queen of Navarre, watched her deportment with the utmost anxiety; especially as her husband seemed the inseparable companion of the dauphin, whose hostile intents had been imparted to the emperor by queen Eleanor.

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* Sleidan,—Commentar. Sandoval,—Hist. de la Vida del Emperador Carlos V.

At Amboise, the emperor in reality incurred great risk to his life, being nearly suffocated by the thick and noxious vapour of perfumes burning in the antechamber of his apartment. An alarm being fortunately given in time, the emperor was raised from his bed and carried to the open window in a state of insensibility. The unfortunate individual, who bore the title of chamber perfumer to the king, was arrested the following morning, and condemned to be hanged; but Charles solicited and obtained his pardon.† Probably this sudden seizure, instead of arising, as it was said, from the smoke of perfumes burning in the antechamber of the imperial apartment, was a slight fit of epilepsy brought on by anxiety of mind. Charles was occasionally subject to such attacks; and once while he was kneeling before the altar at high mass he fell forwards on his face, and remained insensible for more than two hours, to the great alarm of his attendants, as it was his second epileptic seizure within the space of two months.‡

Another accident befell the emperor during his sojourn at Amboise, which raised his suspicion to an almost intolerable extent. He was dining in public with the king, in the grand hall of the castle of Amboise. The chancellor happened to be passing along a gallery or platform which slightly projected over the royal table, when, by some accident, the train of his robe caught against a log of wood, which, during Poyet's efforts to extricate himself, fell over the gallery and struck the emperor a severe blow on the side of the head. Charles rose from the table in dismay; but on perceiving the cause of the accident he declined to retire, and, although much hurt, the emperor waited until the termination of the banquet before he sought the aid of his surgeons.*

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* Brantôme,—Dames Illustres. Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

† Dupleix—Hist. Gén. de France.

‡ Bibl. Rôy. MSS. de Béth., No. 8486. Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

From Amboise the emperor proceeded to Fontainebleau; where he was entertained by royal stag hunts in the noble forest; and from thence he repaired with Francis to the Bois de Vincennes, preparatory to making his entry into Paris. On New Year's Day, 1540, this gorgeous pageant defiled through the streets of the capital: the emperor proceeded in the first instance to Nôtre Dame, to be present at a solemn Te Deum chanted in honour of his visit. He rode between the dauphin and the duke of Orleans; before him marched the constable, bearing aloft the sword of state. In the evening the king entertained his imperial guest and the chief nobles at a magnificent banquet at the Palais. At the conclusion of the repast, a deputation of municipal dignitaries presented the emperor with a gift from the city of Paris. This was a silver statue of Hercules the size of a man, it being the loyal intention of the inhabitants of Paris to demonstrate to Charles, that "the riches of their town were sufficient to hold his designs in check, and to furnish the king with all needful supplies for the maintenance of the war." The following day the king entertained the emperor in his palace of the Louvre, when all the ladies of the court were present.†

A plot, meanwhile, was concerted between the dauphin, the king of Navarre, and Antoine, duke de Vendôme, to arrest the emperor. Their design was to seize his person, while he paid a visit to the constable de Montmorency at Chantilly, without previous reference to the king or to the privy council. This daring scheme certainly would have been carried into effect but for the remonstrances of the constable, who undauntedly represented to the impetuous prince that he was bound to respect the pledge given by his royal father to the emperor. "Monsieur le connétable," exclaimed the dauphin Henry, when, in concert with the other two princes, he unfolded his design to Montmorency, during Charles's sojourn at Chantilly, "we are come to impart to you a design we have formed; and I request you, as my confidential friend, to aid me with your advice and assistance in performing it." "Monseigneur," replied the constable, "you have only to command." "I have resolved, then, in concert with these, my cousins,* to seize the person of the emperor, and to detain him in captivity until he grants redress for the wrongs which he has done my father," rejoined the young prince, vehemently. Montmorency then gravely uttered the following admonition: "Monsieur, you are, as you well know, here in your own house, and you can command as you please; but, as your humble servant, I will take leave to represent to you, that, though the way to bind oxen is by the horns, men are bound by their word. Kings cannot be compelled to do justice like ordinary persons; redress is only to be sought for by appealing to their honour and their word. The king your father has plighted his faith to the emperor; therefore I maintain, monsieur, that you are bound to respect it, and cannot act in defiance of it. You would greatly offend the king, and ruin for ever the renown which he has gained throughout Christendom for the generous treatment he is offering to so great an enemy."† These bold words, spoken so honestly by the constable, produced a great effect upon the young prince, who desisted from his hostile intents. Some indiscreet personage, however, informed the emperor of the peril he had escaped; which of course did not diminish Charles's desire to find himself safely out of France. One day, as Francis and the emperor were amusing themselves by watching various sports in the meadows which then surrounded the Palais des Tournelles, Charles was startled by feeling himself suddenly clasped in the strong arms of a cavalier who had sprung up behind him on his saddle, while a voice pronounced, with ringing emphasis, the words: "My lord emperor, you are my prisoner!" The emperor looked round with indignant dismay; but his frown was effaced by a smile when he perceived that his bold challenger was the young duke of Orleans, who seems to have taken malicious pleasure in playing upon Charles's apprehensions.

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* Dupleix,—Hist. Gén. de France.

† Belleforest,—Hist. Gén. de France. Mém. de du Bellay. Sandoval.

The question of the Milanese was several times discussed by Francis in his political conferences with his imperial guest. Charles promised faithfully to grant the desired investiture; but declined to give the king any written promise or guarantee until he returned into his own dominions. He skilfully represented to Francis that such a document, if extorted from him, would be of no avail, as the king himself had rendered its after disavowal legitimate by his own renowned protest against the treaty of Madrid, which declared: "*Que prisonnier gardé n'est tenu à nulle foi, n'y ne se peut obliger à rien.*" The emperor, nevertheless, offered spontaneously to give the written promise of investiture, desired by Francis for his son, on arriving at the first town in his Flemish dominions.

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* The king of Navarre and the duke de Vendôme.

† Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

The last expedition which Francis and the emperor took together while at Paris, was to the royal tombs at St. Denis. Charles, who traced a common ancestry with Francis, through his grandmother, Mary of Burgundy, the lineal descendant of duke Philip the Bold, son of king John, desired to visit the mausoleum of the Valois kings. The gloom of the sepulchre, the convent, or of the chamber of death, exercised peculiar fascination over the mind of the emperor Charles. He delighted in the solitude which seemed to realize and to add intensity to his melancholy and morbid speculations. The sombre cloister of St. Lazare of Toledo was the chosen abode of the emperor during the happier portions of his life, which undoubtedly were spent in Spain. The silent courts of this monastery, and the monotonous routine of its inmates, which the emperor conformed to as much as his august position permitted, presented greater attractions to the fancy of Charles than he found at Aranjuez, a palace not very distant from Toledo, with its gardens and varied scenery. The mother of the renowned Isabel the Catholic, a Portuguese princess, died a raving lunatic; Isabel's daughter, Juana la Loca, the mother of the emperor, inherited the malady in its most fatal aspect; and this hereditary tendency to insanity was more or less developed in the melancholy temperaments of all her children.

The abbot of St. Denis, followed by the monks of the monastery walking in procession, attended the two monarchs during their progress. The emperor gazed long on the marble effigies of the mighty race of sovereigns entombed in the vaults of the cathedral. The impression made upon Charles was profound; and the gravity of his pale features, as he slowly retraced his steps back to the portal of the cathedral, was remarked by all; yet that visit was more consonant to the feelings of the emperor than any brilliant pageant which had greeted him since his arrival in France.

After making a brief sojourn at Chantilly, the emperor departed for St. Quentin, still accompanied by Francis, who there bade him farewell and returned to his capital. The constable, with the two princes, attended him as far as Valenciennes. Before he took farewell of the emperor, Montmorency requested Charles to fulfil the promise he had made of sending the king a written engagement to confer the duchy of Milan on the duke of Orleans. The emperor, as usual, artfully evaded the demand, by declaring, "that time must be allowed him to confer with his council on the conditions upon which the investiture should be made; but it was hardly to be expected that he could occupy himself with that affair until after the revolt of the Gantois had been subdued, and exemplary chastisement made of the rebels."* With this response Montmorency was compelled to return into France, conscious that the duplicity of the emperor had again triumphed. Charles proceeded to subdue the revolt of his Flemish subjects. The Gantois submitted on his summons, and opened their gates to the Imperial troops. Their rebellion was punished with the utmost rigour by the emperor, who wished to afford a signal example to the other towns in Flanders of the severity with which he was prepared to repress seditious risings. Seven or eight ringleaders of the insurrection were put to death; the privileges of the town were annulled; and the inhabitants compelled to construct a citadel, and to maintain a garrison in Ghent at their own expense. When Charles, by the imposition of these humiliating conditions, had completely subdued the turbulence of the proud citizens of Ghent, he retired to Brussels. The French ambassador, the bishop of Lavour, by the express command of his court, then requested the emperor to give a ratification in writing of the verbal promise made in his name to king Francis by the Imperial ambassadors at Compiègne; an engagement he had since confirmed to the king in the presence of the constable de Montmorency. The revolt of the Flemings being now entirely subdued, Charles had no longer urgent cause to conciliate the French; he therefore ceased to dissemble, and flatly told the bishop that he had no written confirmation to give, as he never made any promise relative to the Milanese: for so far from it ever having been his intention to bestow that important fief on the duke of Orleans, or any other French prince, he was about to grant the investiture of the duchy to his own son, Don Philip, prince of the Asturias.*

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* Mém. de Du Bellay.

The indignation of Francis was unbounded when he found how egregiously he had been again duped by the artifice of the emperor. Tormented by bodily suffering and political cares, the disposition of the king underwent a grave alteration. He found no longer exclusive delight in the dissipated pleasures of his earlier years; his reverses, the impoverished condition of the exchequer, and the suspicions which had latterly risen in his mind induced a much closer application to business. An irritability of temper, resulting from the severe suffering he endured, took place of the gaiety and careless *insouciance* of the king's former deportment. He became stern, careful, and suspicious, and the slightest contradiction sufficed to elicit the imperious expression of a will that submitted to no appeal. The queen of Navarre and the duchesse d'Estampes alone, of all the friends of his youth, retained their influence; Marguerite continued to be her brother's sole adviser; while Madame d'Estampes shared with the king the few diversions for which he retained a relish.

The admiral de Brion first experienced the effects of the king's altered character. Francis was one day commenting severely on the lavish luxury displayed by several lords of the court, whom his favour had raised to wealth and honours, while they knew that the kingdom was threatened by another ruinous war; and he sarcastically made some allusion to the means—not always immaculate

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* Du Bellay. Dupleix. Sleidan.

—by which his favourites enriched themselves. The admiral de Brion, who knew that the king's censure was chiefly aimed at himself, warmly replied, "that the king was at liberty to investigate his conduct; but as his actions had been irreproachable in every respect, he dreaded not the most searching scrutiny."* The king, in a paroxysm of passion, imagining that the admiral meant to brave his anger, took Brion at his word; and summoning the chancellor Poyet, he commanded the arrest of his old favourite, and appointed commissioners to investigate the manner in which the admiral had discharged his office. Poyet was the deadly enemy of the admiral, and he left no arts untried to exasperate the king against his fallen favourite—a design in which he was seconded by the constable, who triumphed in the unexpected disgrace of his rival. In vain Madame d'Estampes threw herself at the king's feet, and with a passionate burst of tears implored his clemency for the admiral: her intercession seemed only to aggravate the displeasure of Francis, who suspected Brion of cherishing warmer sentiments for the beautiful duchess than the ties of family alliance between them warranted. Madame d'Estampes therefore refrained to supplicate; but the most bitter resentment agitated her mind against Poyet and the constable; and she waited a favourable moment signally to avenge the admiral for their malicious interference. The trial of the admiral was therefore commenced without delay; he was impeached upon, and found guilty of twenty-five capital charges, the gravest amongst them consisting in his having, unsanctioned by the royal sign manual, imposed a small tax on a herring fishery, in the discharge of his functions of admiral and surveyor-general of the coasts. The court sentenced him to a fine of 150,000 livres Tournois, and to perpetual banishment, with degradation from his office and dignities. This unjust sentence roused the generous indignation of the king, who in his heart believed in his favourite's innocence, and diverted his wrath from the admiral to Brion's judges.† Francis, however, who had not forgiven the admiral's presumed defiance of his royal authority, suffered Brion's venal and unworthy judges to record their sentence. He afterwards admitted his disgraced favourite to an interview. "Well, most irreproachable subject, dare you still maintain your innocence?" were the words which Francis first addressed to Brion. "Sire, I have learned in prison that no man can proclaim himself innocent in the sight of God and his king!" responded the admiral; "nevertheless, the vindictive malice of my enemies has failed to convict me of disloyal treason to your majesty."* Francis appeared to be much moved at the sight of the ravages which imprisonment and anxiety of mind had wrought on the health of his once brilliant favourite. The duchesse d'Estampes again pleaded the admiral's cause: her success was complete; for Francis already deeply repented his capricious and ungenerous persecution of Brion. Poyet accordingly was summoned before his royal master, who briefly and without comment commanded him to draw letters patent under the great seal, revoking the sentence in all its details, and reinstating the admiral in his dignities and offices.

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* Le Laboureur,—Eloge de l'Admiral de Brion—Additions aux Mémoires de Castelnau.

† Le Laboureur. Mezeray,—Grande Histoire.

The admiral made use of his recovered influence to obtain a re-hearing of his cause, which terminated in a triumphant acquittal; for the chancellor, in the hope of propitiating Brion and Madame d'Estampes, manifested as much eager solicitude to obtain proofs of the admiral's innocence, as he had before contributed, by dishonest bribery, to procure his former condemnation. The health of the admiral de Brion, however, never recovered its former vigour; the humiliation and anxiety which he had suffered, united to the disgrace of imprisonment, brought on a malady under which he languished for many months. Even after his restoration to the king's favour, the malicious insinuation of his enemies—that he owed his acquittal rather to the favour of Madame d'Estampes than to the proofs which had been adduced of his innocence of the charges preferred—continued to haunt the unfortunate admiral to the last day of existence. His health at length totally succumbed beneath this unmerited obloquy, and the admiral expired of chagrin, early in the year 1543, to the inexpressible sorrow and remorse of his royal master, who intended only to humble a presumptuous servant, and to remind him that he owed both rank and wealth to the favour of the crown alone.

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* Le Laboureur. Mezeray,—Grande Histoire.

Whilst the emperor was at Ghent, the duke of Cleves and Juliers came to solicit that Charles would confirm to him the investiture of the duchy of Guelders, which had lapsed to the duke's father, William II., by right of inheritance, and the election of the States, about a year previous to his death. Charles ever regarded the Imperial fiefs as appendages of his crown, to be retained or conferred by him upon princes who would hold them in strict conformity to his will, as best suited his interest when they chanced to lapse. His usurpation of the Milanese from the descendants of the Visconti, had been crowned with success; the acquisition, in a similar manner, of the duchy of Guelders, the emperor thought, might now be achieved, and united to his dominions of the Netherlands. The request made by the duke of Cleves, therefore, received a positive refusal on the part of the emperor, who plainly declared it to be his intention to incorporate the duchy with the provinces of the Low Countries. This decision was not only at variance with the claims of the duke of Cleves, but it excited great contentions in the House of Lorraine; as the duke of Lorraine being nephew to the last duke of Guelders, was considered by many to have had a preferable right over his competitor, William II., father of the present claimant, who was chosen by the states of the duchy. Perceiving that remonstrances produced no effect on the determination of the emperor, the duke of Cleves quitted the Imperial court, and journeyed to Paris to demand the investiture of the duchy of Guelders from king Francis, with troops to maintain his rights. This opportunity of testifying his resentment for the emperor's recent bad faith, was too agreeable to the king to meet with refusal. The duke was therefore received with distinguished honour at the court of France; and as his riches were great and his territories large, the king, to bind him more steadfastly to the interests of France, proposed to bestow upon him the hand of his young niece, Jeanne d'Albret, Marguerite's daughter, and the heiress of Béarn, Foix, and Armagnac. As the princess had only just accomplished her twelfth year, the duke of Cleves consented to the only condition imposed by Francis, which was, that Jane, after her betrothal, should be suffered to remain in France for the space of three years, in order that her education might be completed.

Francis, whose dislike of the king of Navarre was unconquerable, had never discarded the suspicion that it was Henry's desire and future design to bestow the hand of the princess Jane on the son of the emperor, a project as injurious to the interests of France as it was distasteful to the king's personal feelings. The emperor during his recent passage through France addressed many flattering compliments to the king of Navarre; and on several occasions affected even a desire to confer privately with Henry. The princess yet remained under the king's sole guardianship; in a year or two, however, Jane's education would be complete, when her father, on the demand of the states of Béarn, would doubtless insist on permission being accorded him to convey his daughter to Pau, that she might receive the homage and recognition of her future subjects. Once at Pau, the removal of the young princess over the Spanish frontiers was a design easily achieved. The union of his niece with the duke of Cleves, therefore, would remove all uneasiness on the part of Francis as to the ulterior designs of the king of Navarre; while by marrying the princess to a foreign prince whose territories lay distant from France, the king effectually prevented the undue aggrandizement of any of his own subjects by an alliance with the heiress of Béarn. The intrepid spirit of the young princess, besides, was becoming a serious source of embarrassment to the king. The little Jane, though she manifested devoted attachment to her royal uncle, did not approve of the close restraint in which he held her at his castle of Plessis-les-Tours; and on several occasions her spirit displayed itself in acts of wilful disobedience, to the serious consternation of her good preceptress, Aymée de la Fayette. It was the wish of the princess to be permitted to reside with her royal mother; or she would have been well content to sojourn wherever the king did; but the gloomy chambers of Plessis, the lonely position of the castle, and the terrible stories current in the neighbourhood respecting the dark scenes transacted within its walls during the reign of her royal ancestor, Louis XI., produced a great and painful impression on the imagination of the youthful princess, and made her loathe her abode. "Jane, the sole heiress of our Henry and Marguerite," says the historian Olhagaray, "was brought up in France, at Plessis-les-Tours, which place her uncle Francis I. seldom permitted her to leave, because he feared that his brother-in-law intended to bestow this princess on Philip, son of the emperor. This abode proved very wearisome to our princess, so that her chamber often echoed with her lamentations and the air with her sighs, while she gave a loose rein to her tears. The lustre of her complexion, for she was one of the fairest princesses of Europe, was marred by the abundance of her tears; her hair floated negligently on her shoulders, and her lips remained without smiles." Perceiving, therefore, that his niece was not to be appeased but by a removal to some more cheerful abode, the king resolved that she should forthwith plight her faith to the duke of Cleves.

It is stated everywhere, and by historians of all shades of politics, that Francis arbitrarily bestowed the hand of the princess Jane of Navarre upon the duke of Cleves, in defiance of the entreaties and firmly expressed disapprobation of her parents. So unanimous are the assertions on this point, that it must have met with general belief as a fact at the time. When this alliance took place, Brantôme, Olhagaray, Favyn, and numerous other historians contemporary with the princess Jane, declare unequivocally that king Francis, without the consent of the king and queen of Navarre, and to their deep affliction, compelled his niece to espouse the duke of Cleves. This anecdote, little honourable to the character of Francis, or consistent with the affection which he bore his sister, has been lately totally refuted by the discovery of a letter written by queen Marguerite to her brother, expressly approving of her daughter's intended alliance; and also by a curious document, the protest of the princess Jane against her marriage with the duke of Cleves, in which the young princess recounts the means used by her royal mother to induce her to obey the mandate of the king.* The king of Navarre, doubtless, greatly disapproved in his heart of such an alliance for his daughter, whatever the sentiments of his royal consort may have been; it exposed his subjects of Béarn, after his death, to future oppressions from the French crown, while their sovereigns were living at a distance in their German dominions: or, on the other hand, it doomed Jane, when queen of Navarre, to quit her husband to reign over her own hereditary domains.

When the duke of Cleves arrived at the French court, Marguerite was sojourning at Alençon. To appease the eager supplications of the young princess, the king permitted her to join her mother; a boon also warmly solicited by Marguerite. When the princess, attended by her governess, Madame de Silly, paid her uncle a brief visit while on her way to Alençon, Francis, it seems, took the opportunity of introducing the duke of Cleves to his young niece, and of intimating the matrimonial designs he had formed for her. Jane did not desire to be married; she wished only for liberty, and for permission to join in the gay and animated amusements enjoyed by other maidens of her age and rank. It was therefore with sentiments of surprise and dismay that she heard the notable scheme devised by her uncle to relieve her from her irksome abode of Plessis. Though but a child in years, Jane's intellect was a very precocious one; and she had already given proofs of that undaunted disposition for which she was in after life so distinguished. The manners and conversation of the duke of Cleves, it seems, gave the fastidious little princess of twelve years old no greater satisfaction than his proposals: she therefore boldly took the liberty "of very humbly beseeching her royal uncle that she might not be compelled to marry M. de Cleves." The undisguised repugnance which Jane manifested for the duke of Cleves betokens the early dawn of that penetration and skill in reading character which, in her subsequent political career, preserved her from innumerable perils. Beneath the gallant bearing of duke William, the royal Jane detected that meanness of disposition and cowardice which disgraced the subsequent career of the duke, and rendered him unworthy to possess a loyal and magnanimous heart like her own.

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* Both these documents will be given to the reader in their due order and date

It appears that the opposition of the princess Jane to her union with the duke of Cleves greatly displeased the king, and led him to suppose that she was acting under the direction of her father. Francis must have expressed himself with great harshness to Madame de Silly, to judge by the dismayed tone in which Marguerite writes to her brother to excuse her daughter's presumption, as soon as the circumstances were communicated to her. The temper of the king evidently alarmed Marguerite; and she feared to experience that severity of rebuke which, when roused, had latterly proved so implacable. First, she summoned the young princess to account for the daring observation which had so greatly moved the indignation of her royal uncle. Jane replied, "that she had taken the liberty of speaking frankly to the king; having been in the habit of saying to him all she thought and wished." Marguerite then immediately wrote to the king; and strong must have been the resentment felt by Francis, at the prospect of having this project of his thwarted by the rebellious defiance of the young princess, when Marguerite thought it necessary to use language so submissive: "Monseigneur, in my extreme tribulation I experience but one consolation, which is the certain knowledge, that neither the king of Navarre nor myself feel other desire than to obey you, not only in the matter of this marriage, but in all that you command us. Having heard, monseigneur, that my daughter—not appreciating as she ought the great honour which you conferred by deigning to visit her, nor the obedience which she owes you; neither, that a maiden ought to have no will of her own—was bold enough to utter so senseless a request, as to beseech that she might not be married to M. de Cleves, I know not what to think, monseigneur, nor how to address you, for I am overpowered with grief, and have none in the world to whom I can apply for comfort or counsel. The king of Navarre is also so astonished and grieved, that I have never seen him before so indignant; for we cannot divine whence this great boldness on her part arose, she never having even mentioned such a design to us. She excuses herself on the plea, that she is on more intimate terms with you than even with ourselves; but this intimacy ought not to inspire so great a freedom on her part, being, as I believe, not advised to it by any one. If I could discover the personage who inspired her with such an idea, I would make so great a demonstration of my displeasure, as should convince you, monseigneur, that this foolish affair has been attempted without the sanction and desire of her parents, who have no will but yours. Knowing, therefore, monseigneur, that it is your habit rather to pardon errors than to punish them—especially where the understanding fails, as it has evidently done in this case of my poor daughter—I entreat you very humbly, monseigneur, that for one unreasonable petition she has preferred, and which is the first fault she has committed in respect to yourself, you will not withdraw that paternal favour which you have ever manifested towards her and ourselves; but considering the many perfections which God has endowed you with, you will bear with our infirmities without displeasure. If the dread of your anger makes your subjects tremble, believe, monseigneur, that it smites us with death; for you could not visit us with a more severe punishment than to withdraw your favour, which we have ever prized above kingdoms or treasure whatsoever."* Marguerite despatched the bishop of Séez to Moulins, where the court was sojourning, to present this epistle to her brother, and to explain the willingness of the king of Navarre to obey him in all things, and their distress at the presumptuous conduct of the young princess.

One circumstance doubtless contributed to reconcile the queen of Navarre to this alliance, which was, that the duke of Cleves showed himself well inclined towards Protestantism, and sheltered many of the proscribed Lutheran ministers in his territories. His revenues were ample; and he held an eminent position amongst the sovereign princes of Germany. The duke was only twenty-four years old; his age, therefore, would not eventually have been disproportionate to that of the princess. The most serious impediment to this alliance, which contemporary historians decry as the height of despotism in Francis to have attempted, seems the strange aversion entertained by the princess for her princely suitor. The queen of Navarre applied herself anxiously to overcome her daughter's scruples, after the despatch of her letter to the king. Jane, however, persisted in peremptorily rejecting the duke's offers; she refused to be convinced by her mother's arguments; and when it is considered that she had only just completed her twelfth year, the constancy of her opposition cannot fail to excite astonishment. The queen then menaced the obdurate young princess with punishment, and threatened to cause her to be severely whipped by her governess, Madame de Silly, if she did not speedily evince becoming submission.* It must be supposed that Marguerite, when she thus abetted her brother's design, believed that she was acting for her daughter's ultimate welfare, being convinced that Jane's tender age rendered her incapable of forming a sound judgment on the proposed alliance. It is difficult to believe that the princess could have so long resisted the absolute commands of her mother, and those of her royal uncle, towards whom she had been brought up to manifest the deepest reverence, unless some person secretly directed and exhorted her to persist in her opposition. The hostility of the king of Navarre to this marriage was suspected; for it was known that an alliance with the prince of the Asturias would have been acceptable to him, provided the emperor granted some present concession relative to the kingdom of Navarre. It is possible, therefore, that Henry himself encouraged his youthful daughter in her obstinate rejection of the hand of the duke of Cleves. A peremptory message at length arrived from king Francis, directing that the princess Jane should be affianced without delay to the duke. When this ceremony was accomplished, Marguerite was requested by her brother to bring the princess to Châtellerault, that her marriage might be solemnized there in presence of the court. Driven thus to extremity, the brave young princess adopted, as a last resource, the expedient of making a secret protest against her compulsory nuptials, which she signed herself, and caused to be witnessed by three of her own officers. This curious document, which was composed by Jane herself, and written throughout with her own hand, is as follows:—

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* Bibl. Roy., Supplm. Fran. MS., No. 138.

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* Protestation de Jeanne d'Albret au sujet de son mariage avec le duc de Cleves. Papiers d'Etat du cardinal Granvelle.

"I. Jeanne de Navarre, persisting in the protestations I have already made, do hereby again affirm and protest, by these present, that the marriage which it is desired to contract between the duke of Cleves and myself, is against my will; that I have never consented to it, nor will consent; and that all I may say and do hereafter, by which it may be attempted to prove that I have given my consent, will be forcibly extorted against my wish and desire from my dread of the king, of the king my father, and of the queen my mother, who has threatened to have me well whipped by the Baillive of Caen,* my governess. By command of the queen my mother, my said governess has also several times declared that if I do not all in regard to this marriage which the king wishes, and if I did not give my consent I should be punished so severely as to occasion my death; and that by refusing I might be the cause of the total ruin and destruction of my father, my mother, and of their house; the which has inspired me with such fear and dread, even to be the cause of the ruin of my said father and mother, that I know not to whom to have recourse excepting to God, seeing that my father and my mother abandon me, who both well know what I have said to them,—that never can I love the duke of Cleves, and that I will not have him. Therefore, I protest beforehand, if it happens that I am affianced, or married to the said duke of Cleves in any way or manner, it will be against my heart, and in defiance of my will; and that he shall never become my husband, nor will I ever hold and regard him as such, and that any marriage shall be reputed null and void; in testimony of which I appeal to God and to yourselves as witnesses of this my declaration that you are about to sign with me, admonishing each of you to remember the compulsion, violence, and constraint employed against me upon the matter of this said marriage.

(Signed) "JEHANNE DE NAVARRE.
"J. D'ARRAS.
"FRANCES NAVARRO.
"ARNAULD DUQUESSE."†

This spirited protest, and the precision with which the princess states her grievances, exhibits abilities of a remarkable kind at her early age, if, indeed, it can be believed that such a composition emanated solely from the mind and pen of a girl of twelve years old. The queen of Navarre herself would not doubtless connive at such a proceeding, which she must have regarded as an act of faithlessness towards her brother, a transgression of which Marguerite was never guilty; besides, as it has been before stated, the religious opinions professed by the duke of Cleves greatly recommended him to the queen's favour. Throughout the negotiations preparatory to this marriage the queen acted with perfect good faith in promoting it, as she imagined that her daughter would not feel the same scruples when she grew older. It must, however, excite surprise and regret that Marguerite employed threats to vanquish the resistance of the princess, though Jane's opposition, in those days when parents exercised an absolute dominion over their children, bestowing them in marriage on whom they pleased, appeared novel and presumptuous. It may be added in further excuse for Marguerite, that when the princess was questioned on the reasons of her aversion to this alliance, she could allege no better cause, "than that she deemed it of no advantage to leave France and her own heritage of Béarn to espouse a duke of Cleves."* As soon as the ceremony of her affiancing was over, Jane made a second protest before her departure for the court, which she presented for the signature of the same persons of her household who had witnessed the first. The princess expressed herself thus in this document:—

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* Madame de Silly.

† Papiers d'Etat du cardinal de Granvelle, t. 3., document xxx.

"I, Jehanne de Navarre, in the presence of you who out of love for the truth signed the protestation which I before presented, and who perceive and acknowledge that I am compelled and obliged by the queen my mother, and by my governess, to submit to the marriage demanded by the duke of Cleves, between himself and me; and that it is intended against my will to proceed to the solemnities of a marriage between us, I take you all to witness that I persevere in the protest I made before you on the day of the pretended betrothal between myself and the said duke of Cleves, and in all and every protestation that I may at any time have made by word of mouth, or under my own hand; moreover, I declare that the said solemnity of marriage, and every other thing ordained relative to it, is done against my will; and that all shall hereafter be regarded as null and void, as having been done and consented to by me under violence and restraint; in testimony of which I call you all to witness, requesting you to sign the present with myself, in the hope that by God's help it will one day avail me,

(Signed) "JEHANNE DE NAVARRE.†
"&c., &c."

But notwithstanding her brave heart and resolute daring, Jane was compelled to submit. She was received with great honour and affection by her royal uncle, Francis I., who affected to look upon her reluctance as a childish piece of insubordination. The duke of Cleves paid assiduous court to the mother of his resolute little bride elect; and Marguerite, by her influence over the duke, obtained many concessions for her daughter,* and, amongst other things, that Jane should be committed exclusively to her own care until she became old enough to reside with her husband.

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* Olhagaray,—Hist. de Foix, Béarn, et Navarre.

† Papiers d'État du cardinal Granvelle, document xxx., t. 3.

On her bridal day, the princess Jane was arrayed in a robe of cloth of gold, so studded with pearls and jewels "that it was a sight to behold." The health of the princess never having been strong since the severe attack of illness which caused her royal mother such alarm, when the hour came for her to proceed to church for the celebration of the nuptial ceremony, she found herself so indisposed and afflicted as to be unable to walk under the weight of the jewels adorning her robes. The king, who had intended to lead the bride himself to the altar, when informed of this obstacle, summoned the constable de Montmorency, and commanded him to take the princess in his arms, and carry her to the church.† This mandate created great consternation and amazement amongst the courtiers: it was an indignity offered to the august rank of the constable, whose place was to march immediately before the sovereign, bearing the sword of state. The approaching fall of the constable had been predicted by many; and it is more than probable that Montmorency's exile from court was then resolved upon. Marguerite had ceased to plead for him; and if Brantôme is to be credited, she even accelerated his disgrace; while Madame d'Estampes made no secret of her determination to procure his banishment.

The constable left his place in the procession, and silently obeyed the mandate of his imperious sovereign. The king's deportment on this occasion, however, convinced Montmorency that he had fallen irretrievably in his sovereign's favour. On returning to his rank in the procession, he exclaimed, so as to be heard by all: "*C'est fait desormais de ma faveur. Adieu luy dis!*"* When Marguerite witnessed the humiliation so publicly inflicted upon Montmorency, it is recorded that she exclaimed: "See, he who would have ruined me in the favour of the king my brother, is now compelled to carry my daughter to church!"† The queen could never forgive the constable for his attempt to alienate from her the king's affection; and the baseness of his ingratitude hardened her heart, and prevented her from feeling compassion for the humiliation imposed upon him.

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* Du Haillan,—Hist Gén. de France, augmentée par Arnoul du Ferron.

† The infant of Foix performed the same office by command of Louis XII., when the princess Claude was affianced to the duke de Valois, afterwards Francis I., and carried the infant bride in his arms to the altar.

Francis refrained from manifesting his resolve relative to Montmorency until the conclusion of Jane's marriage festivities: probably before that time his intentions were not finally taken. The king's previous displeasure had been greatly augmented by the disappointment he experienced on the failure of the emperor's promise, upon the fulfilment of which the constable rashly pledged his word. The intimacy subsisting between Montmorency and queen Eleanor, moreover, deeply offended the king, who conceived that Montmorency failed in the respect incumbent on a subject by assuming to become the queen's tutor; it also kindled suspicions in the mind of Francis, that as Bourbon had betrayed him to the emperor, so also it might be the ultimate design of the constable. The king never trusted his consort: though Eleanor had repeatedly given proof of her devotedness to his interests, she was carefully kept in ignorance of the political schemes of the French cabinet, as her attachment to the emperor occasioned distrust. The wilful and unjust prejudices of the king generally met with chastisement; in this instance, the queen, whom Francis injured and distrusted, has never been accused of betraying the secrets of the state to her brother; while the unprincipled duchesse d'Estampes, who possessed his confidence, notoriously lived in league with the emperor's agents.

Not one of the French cabinet repented now more deeply than did Francis himself, that Charles had been suffered to pass through France without being compelled to give a promise relative to the cession of the duchy of Milan. Montmorency's enthusiasm for the emperor, and the fervour of his assurance that Charles, when once in his own dominions, would do all that the king required, was now remembered to the constable's disadvantage by his royal master. Francis recalled, moreover, the queen's tearful pleadings when informed by Montmorency of the hostile attitude of the council; and with a distrust kindled by repeated betrayals and reverses, he imagined that the constable, in league with Eleanor and at her persuasion, favoured the designs of Charles. The admiral and the duchesse d'Estampes exerted their eloquence to increase the displeasure of the king, by exaggerating Montmorency's influence over the dauphin, and the young prince's undutiful deportment; and they represented, with the utmost acrimony, the evil return which the constable had made to the unbounded friendship displayed towards him by the queen of Navarre, craftily leaving the king to draw his own inferences of the probability of his old favourite's fidelity to himself therefrom. If Francis consulted Marguerite, no extenuation was proffered by her to screen Montmorency from the malicious suggestions of his enemies; she felt too profoundly aggrieved to interfere more in his behalf.

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* Brantôme,—Dames Illustres—Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

† Ibid.

The most brilliant pageants, meanwhile, celebrated the nuptials of the princess Jane of Navarre with the duke of Cleves. The young bride continued sullen; and could not be induced to partake in the gaiety of the fêtes given by her uncle, though she was obliged to sanction them by her presence. "In the meadow of Chastelleraud," relates a contemporary chronicler,* "jousts and tournays were holden, for which halls, galleries, triumphal arches, and palaces, were constructed of verdant boughs, within which armed knights were placed to defend them in honour of the ladies of their heart, whose devices were interlaced in the foliage with the arms of the cavaliers, and other spoil captured from the assailants. Close to these said edifices, were verdant hermitages tenanted by hermits, clad in green or grey velvet, and other gay colours; whose office it was to serve as guides to any strange knight who might happen to arrive. In another part of the meadow were ladies, who personated nymphs and dryades, attended by their dwarfs, all ordered according to the mode and fashion of bygone days. This joust for novelty and magnificence was the most memorable thing of the kind which had been done or heard of in our days. These knightly encounters came off in the day time; but that there might not lack amusement at night, lists were constructed in which the joustings continued by torchlight; a thing never before heard of in France."

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* Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

As soon as the festivities terminated, the duke of Cleves took his leave of the king and his bride, and returned into Germany. Jane accompanied her parents to their castle of Pau, a place which apparently she had never before visited. Before the king quitted Châtellerault, Montmorency experienced the result of his selfish and unprincipled conduct; he was deprived by the king of his posts of grand master of the household, and of his political offices, with the exception of that of constable, which could not be alienated, and was dismissed from court to his castle of Ecouen. The constable's total disgrace did not occur until the year 1542, as letters exist showing that Francis occasionally corresponded, on affairs connected with the state, with his fallen favourite until that period.

Montmorency after his disgrace incautiously continued his intimate *liaison* with the dauphin. The rival factions of the duchesse d'Estampes and of Madame de Valentinois still convulsed the court, so that the most trifling incident which appeared to give either party a momentary preponderance was magnified by the other with malignant bitterness. An imprudent piece of jesting on the part of the dauphin irretrievably ruined the constable in the opinion of the king; who even when his kingdom was again reduced to the greatest straits from a fresh invasion, perseveringly refused to avail himself of Montmorency's military talents. One day, Brissac, St. André, and other favourite companions of the dauphin were assembled in that prince's apartments. The discourse turned on the political events of the day. Each person present having given his opinion, the dauphin was called upon to declare his sentiments. Henry's words elicited repeated bursts of applause, and the young nobles foolishly, though out of mere frolic, bent the knee and saluted him as king. Instead of rebuking this action, the dauphin, pursuing the jest, gravely proceeded as the sovereign to dispose of the principal offices in the state: he assigned the dignity of marshal to one, that of chamberlain to another, and concluded by declaring it to be his royal resolve to reinstate the constable de Montmorency in his offices, and to render him inferior to none in the realm. Unfortunately the party perceived not that Briandas, the king's favourite jester, had entered the apartment, and stood contemplating the scene before him in silent astonishment. The dwarf, who was much attached to his royal master, conceiving that something injurious was meditated, took an opportunity of escaping unperceived from the chamber, and went in search of the king, whom he found at supper with Madame d'Estampes, the cardinal de Lorraine, and the count de St. Paul. Briandas had always been accustomed, when speaking to his royal master, to address him by the title of "Roi." He now approached and roughly exclaimed: "*Dieu te garde, François de Valois!*" "Ah, Briandas," rejoined the king, "who taught thee that new salutation?" "*Par le sang-Dieu,*" replied the dwarf, "thou art no longer king, François, for I have just quitted his presence; M. de Taix is no longer master-general of artillery, Brissac has that post; and you, monseigneur," continued the mischievous jester, pointing to a lord of the court, "you must resign your chamberlain's wand to St. André." Briandas then turned again to the king: "*Par la mordieu, François de Valois,* my lord the constable will soon be back again at court to command thee with his wand, and to teach thee how to play the fool; escape, or thou art lost!" This address caused great consternation. The king rose from table in a transport of passion, and, accompanied by Madame d'Estampes, he took the jester aside and demanded an explanation of his words. Briandas, in great trepidation, recounted the scene which he had witnessed, naming, by the express command of Francis, all the parties concerned. Incensed at what he deemed so flagrant an outrage on his royal prerogatives, the king determined on the arrest of the culprits, and summoning the captain of the Scotch guard and twenty or thirty archers, he proceeded to the apartment of the dauphin.

Fortunately some friend, probably the cardinal de Lorraine, contrived to warn Henry and his band of cavaliers of the disagreeable consequences their folly was likely to entail; for when Francis entered his son's apartments all had made their escape. The king then vented his indignation on the dauphin's gentlemen and pages in waiting, whom the archers pursued with drawn swords, compelling them to make a precipitate exit by the windows of the apartment. All the rich furniture of the chamber was next hurled below into the court-yard, as a booty for the soldiers. Francis then retired, after this unkingly demonstration of his displeasure, and, summoning his council, he despatched missives to the delinquents, interdicting them from approaching within ten miles of any place where the court might be sojourning. Even the dauphiness received an intimation that her presence would be dispensed with at court; and Catherine, overwhelmed with grief at being included in the penalty of a fault in which she had not participated, withdrew to Blois.*

A reconciliation was with difficulty effected between Francis and his son, after the lapse of some weeks, through the mediation of queen Eleanor; but no entreaties could prevail upon the king to pardon his abettors in the frolic, or permit them to return to court. Montmorency entirely lost the king's favour; who after this affair would never permit the constable's name to be mentioned in his presence, and completely withdrew his royal countenance from him in all matters.

The disgrace of the constable de Montmorency excited wonder and comment amongst all classes of persons uninitiated in the intrigues of the court; to them he had seemed at the summit of royal favour, and to have succeeded to the power of the cardinal Duprat, while possessing personal influence in a more exalted degree over his royal master. Foreign potentates propitiated Montmorency's favour by the most flattering appellations; and by his own peers—such was once the height of the constable's influence in the state—he was unanimously addressed as "monseigneur," a title in those days almost exclusively reserved for royal rank. The House of Lorraine alone made the exception; the cardinal de Lorraine, and the stalwart Claude, duke de Guise, and his valiant son, François le Balafré, maintained the pre-eminence of their descent above the pretensions of the Montmorency, giving the constable the simple appellation of "Monsieur le connétable."

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* Mém. du Maréchal de Vieilleville.

In Béarn, ecclesiastical affairs occupied Marguerite's attention during the winter of the year 1540. Soon after the arrival of the king and queen of Navarre at Pau, the bishop of Oléron died suddenly by poison administered, as it was strongly suspected, by certain disaffected ecclesiastics of his diocese. The sovereigns of Navarre hastened to despatch a messenger named Jehan Doulcet to Rome, to solicit that the vacant bishopric of Oléron might be bestowed on Gérard Roussel, who is styled in the memorial signed by the king of Navarre for this purpose, "a doctor in theology, abbé of Clairac, confessor and almoner in ordinary to the said lord and lady, the king and queen of Navarre." This document set forth as urgent reasons why pope Paul should comply with the solicitation, "that Oléron being a frontier town, it would not be politic to appoint a stranger to the see, to whom, moreover, the diocesan clergy would be little disposed to render obedience, while, on the contrary, they held Gérard Roussel in great love and esteem, as he was well known to them as a preacher, and greatly trusted by the sovereigns."* It is a singular circumstance that Marguerite should have ventured to recommend thus urgently to the Holy See for episcopal honours, a personage who had been twice tried by command of the Sorbonne for heresy, and who each time narrowly escaped with life through her intercession; though perhaps it seems yet more extraordinary that she obtained her suit. The bishopric was immediately awarded to Roussel on the voluntary demission of cardinal Salviati, who held the benefice in reserve, on condition of receiving in lieu a pension of 200 ducats.

Marguerite's satisfaction was great at having procured a mitre for her old friend and *protégé*, Roussel, who proceeded to administer the affairs of his diocese with zealous devotion. Unhappily, however, the bishop's views on religious matters were by no means defined; a circumstance that materially diminished his public utility. Roussel agreed on religious matters neither with Luther, Calvin, nor yet with the See of Rome from which he accepted episcopal ordination. His creed approximated nearest to the doctrines preached by Luther; though, in the opinions he held relative to the holy eucharist, he dissented from those of that eminent reformer. Roussel's mode of celebrating the Romish services in his cathedral at Oléron, was peculiar, and forcibly demonstrated the weakness of which Rome herself must have been conscious, when she tolerated amongst her sons a prelate who had notoriously departed from her ritual and obedience. The bishop of Oléron was invariably present at the services chanted during the day in his cathedral, and usually officiated himself at mass. When he came to the part of the service where the priest communicates, Roussel advanced to the front of the altar, and delivered an extempore address to his congregation, explaining his views on the mystery of the holy sacrament, and on other controversial points, in the Basque dialect. He then invited all to approach, and fearlessly partake of the sacred elements, which the bishop proceeded to administer in both kinds to the laity who responded to his invitation.* Of no greater act of nonconformity to the tenets of the Romish Church could Roussel have been guilty; and yet no attempt was made by his metropolitan, or by the parliament of Paris, to procure his deposition from the See of Oléron. Roussel's unbounded charity of disposition, and his extreme humility, procured him ardent supporters, even amongst those who differed from him in doctrine. His excellent learning and meekness are highly extolled; indeed the bishop's unfailing forgiveness of injuries became proverbial in Béarn, so that it used to be said, it was more advantageous to a man to injure the bishop of Oléron than to render him service. This honourable reputation attracted crowds of worshippers to the cathedral within which Roussel ministered. The simple Béarnnois found marvellous pleasure in hearing the articles of the faith they loved so ably expounded; and even the clergy of the neighbouring diocese of Lescar often forsook their own bishop, an assiduous courtier of Marguerite's, to receive instruction from the lips of the eloquent Roussel. The bishop of Lescar, the prelate who held first precedence in Béarn, being a member of the royal House of Albret, was perfectly subservient to the will of his royal mistress; and consequently, when he perceived that it was her pleasure to sanction the unorthodox practices of her confessor and almoner, the supple prelate suffered no discountenance of his own to interfere with Marguerite's projects.

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* Mémoire et advertissement à Jehan Doulcet pour l'affaire de l'evesché d'Oléron, etc. MS. Bibl. Roy. Published by M. Génin, "Lettres de la Reine de Navarre."

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* Varillas,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

Many of the prelates whose sees lay within the limits of the principality, were far, however, from showing themselves pliant as the bishop of Lescar. During the winter of 1540, the queen of Navarre encountered terrible annoyance, and even danger, relative to a suit which she had instituted, two years previously, in order to remove the bishop of Condom from his see; and soon after her return into Béarn, a plot against her life was discovered, projected by the adherents of the bishop. Erard de Grossoles, bishop of Condom, was one of the most zealous champions of the papacy in the south of France; and the vacillating policy pursued by the French cabinet, in affairs of religion, roused his passionate reprehension. The bishop of Condom, in short, essayed to play in Béarn and Gascony the same *rôle* as the syndic Noël Béda once aimed at doing in Paris. When the emperor Charles V. propagated throughout his hereditary dominions, and Germany, those calumnies so humiliating to Francis I., the bishop of Condom repeated the slanderous charges from the pulpit of his cathedral, adding personal invectives of the most disloyal nature, relative to the conduct of the king, and of the king and queen of Navarre. Marguerite instantly directed informations to be laid against the bishop; and he was temporarily suspended from his episcopal functions, and summoned to Paris to clear himself of the charges. The queen of Navarre prayed her brother to compel the bishop to resign his see, which she requested might be bestowed on her friend, the cardinal du Bellay: "The poorest cardinal, monseigneur, in your dominions, and one who shows you such loyal devotion, that regardless of personal expense, he never refuses to accept any commission confided to him." The council of state, however, was not then in the humour for prosecuting a prelate for excess of zeal; the bishop of Condom was therefore admonished, and dismissed back to his diocese. Encouraged by his partial triumph, the bishop soon resumed his hostile denunciation against the king, the bishop of Oléron, and the queen of Navarre, whom he accused of favouring the Sacramentarian heresy. Marguerite therefore caused fresh representations to be made to her brother; and demanded with great vehemence the removal of so turbulent a prelate from the see of Condom. Francis, in accordance with the wish of his sister, appointed commissioners to proceed to the south, probably to Bordeaux, to investigate the accusations. "Monseigneur," wrote the queen to her brother,* "in all that concerns the cause of M. de Condom, I pray you to believe, that I partake so much of your own disposition, that I do not desire to harm those who hurt me; for if I only were injured, I should find greater felicity in pardoning such offences than in punishing them. The crime of those who offend against you, however, cannot be overlooked by any who call themselves your friends; and I trust, monseigneur, that by sending hither commissioners, you will be more readily obeyed and feared than you have yet been in these parts, where they will find great abuses to correct. The order which you have established in your court of parliament here, is so efficacious, that none have cause for complaint except the evil-disposed; for even, as it is your desire to protect the innocent from the malice of their enemies, so, doubtless, monseigneur, it is your will that the factious, and he who converts the Holy Word of God into a cause for disobedience towards superiors, and of noisy pulpit oratory, should suffer condign chastisement, as is most meet and right. I assure you, monseigneur, that the prayers of all here are offered for you welfare; and there is not one individual amongst us, in the habit of reading the Holy Scriptures, who, hearing another speak disrespectfully of you, does not rebuke him, more from a wholesome fear of your displeasure, than out of dread of punishment." The king nominated two privy councillors, MM. de Bayf, and De Bagie, to inquire into the accusations preferred against the bishop of Condom; and it would appear, that Francis, to tranquillize his sister, promised that whatever might be the decision of the commissioners, the bishop should be translated to the see of Blois, and thence removed from her jurisdiction.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., Bib. Roy., MS. No. 133.

The friends of Erard de Grossoles, during the interval before the arrival of the commissioners, conducted themselves in the most turbulent manner, caballing together, and using threats to intimidate Marguerite, and to induce her to stay the proceedings. A rumour, meanwhile, reached the ears of the king of Navarre, that a plot was in agitation to poison Marguerite during the celebration of high mass on Christmas Day, by burning deadly drugs in the censers, which, during a part of the ceremony, were to be wafted round the queen in homage to her sovereign dignity, after incense had been offered to the sacred images on the altar. This plot appears to have been extensively organized; and several noblemen of high rank, partisans of the bishop of Condom, were base enough to abet the attempt. The baron de Lescure, especially, was one of Marguerite's most inveterate enemies: his zeal for the Church of Rome was intolerant; and he looked upon the queen of Navarre as the open supporter of heresy in the principality, which but for her pernicious influence over the king, would, ere this, have been extinguished there and throughout the realm. In consequence of the secret information imparted to him of this atrocious project, the king of Navarre issued a warrant for the arrest of the baron de Lescure, who, however, found means to escape in time over the frontier into Spain. The baron's conduct was afterwards made the subject of a lengthened investigation, when it appeared that he was likewise implicated in a similar design to poison the Count Palatine.* An arrest of great importance, however, was achieved early in the first month of the year 1542; but Marguerite in her correspondence carefully suppresses the name of the culprit, who appears to have been of the highest rank; and elsewhere no mention is to be discovered relative to this mysterious affair.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. du Suppl. Fran., No. 120.

At this period, when her life was beset with danger, Marguerite was exceedingly indisposed, and expecting her *accouchement* in the course of a few months. This event caused the greatest joy to the king of Navarre, as the long interval which had elapsed since the queen gave birth to the prince whose premature death had been so greatly lamented by both his parents, seemed to render Henry's desire for a male heir to his principalities hopeless. Marguerite displayed great courage in the alarming situation in which she was placed from the malice of the bishop of Condom: she refused to retire into France to her brother, as, perhaps, under the circumstances, it might have been her duty to do, and persisted in awaiting the arrival of the commissioners appointed to investigate the conduct of that contumacious prelate. On Christmas Day, 1541, instead of going to the cathedral, Marguerite caused high mass to be celebrated in the hall of the palace, a service at which, under pretext of indisposition, she assisted, reposing on her bed in a chamber adjoining. About this time, Marguerite wrote on this painful affair to M. d'Izernay, steward of the household to the princess Jeanne, whom she had despatched to the court of France on some special mission. She directs him to explain her position more explicitly to the king, according to the statements contained in her letter. Marguerite says: "I must mention for your guidance that I feel no less indebted to the king for his project of removing M. de Condom to Blois, than for his intention of sending the commissioners here whom you name; for I bear the bishop no personal enmity; I only desire that the king should be revered and obeyed in this country as he ought, and acknowledged to be a clement prince, other than the said bishop has represented. These are matters upon which you are aware I am loath to torment the king; but since the return of the bishop of Condom, the king can have little conception of the daring boldness displayed by the relatives of this prelate! From warnings that I have received to hold myself on guard against poison, which I hear is very much their fashion, I have requested the king of Navarre to dismiss from the town all the adherents of the said bishop, which he has done gradually, after explaining to them the opinion I entertained of them all. He has, moreover, given strict commands to prevent any one from penetrating into our culinary offices here. It is reported that the monks have invented a new mode of poisoning their enemies by the smoke of incense; the which, however, I have no present dread of; as since your departure I have been more indisposed from sickness than ever. On Christmas Day high mass was chanted in our great saloon here, and from my bed I heard matins, and subsequently mass, also."* The queen concludes this letter by desiring Izernay to commend her in warm terms to Madame d'Estampes. It is impossible to divine what motive induced Marguerite to use language so condescending towards the contemptible favourite, who at once flattered and betrayed the king. The queen writes: "As soon as you see Madame d'Estampes, you will not fail to relate to her that which I commissioned you to do; and, above all, to assure her of the affection the king of Navarre and I feel towards her. If your words could convey adequately the strength of our friendship, she would find it fervent as any that can be borne towards another."† In a letter, the sequel of this, addressed likewise to Izernay, Marguerite refers again to the subject; she says: "I imagine that by the time you receive this letter, Madame d'Estampes will be returned, to whom you will not fail to convey the message I sent to her. I pray you, also, to seek her company as much as possible; for you know she finds your society agreeable; by so doing, therefore, you will serve yourself and me. Do not omit to tell her that I comprehend perfectly that she is the author of the consolation that I have lately experienced; and say, also, how favourably disposed you found the king to adjust my affairs according to my desire; adding, that you esteem the discourse which she has from time to time holden with the king respecting me, to have been marvellously beneficial." The affair upon which Izernay was sent related to the recovery of the kingdom of Navarre—a design which afforded the queen of Navarre endless solicitude, even when the aspect of her brother's policy rendered it least probable of accomplishment. To forward this her favourite project, the queen disdained not to propitiate even Madame d'Estampes.

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* Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., MS. No. 8560.

† Ibid, No. 9127.

The queen also despatched a messenger to lay before her brother the depositions taken at the examination of the prisoners arrested on the charge of conspiracy against her life. The bishop of Oléron, it was surmised, had been poisoned by the wicked malice of the monks of his diocese; and the confessions of the prisoner avowed the existence of a conspiracy on so extensive a scale as to fill the mind of Marguerite with dismay, and make her eagerly desire the presence of the royal commissioners. "Monseigneur," wrote she to the king,* "our prisoner, in the hope, perhaps, of saving his life, has promised to perform such difficult things, that the king of Navarre dares not trust his protestations nor his tears. He argues that as the prisoner has so freely confessed to the design of poisoning us both, there must be something to conceal of still greater magnitude. I strongly suspect that he has been holding secret and traitorous correspondence which he fears to own; but when M. de Bayf arrives, accompanied by the bailiff of Orleans and some competent personages chosen from your courts of parliament, we shall be able to elicit the truth. The prisoner is a man more fitting to deceive, and plausible in his discourse, than I have ever before met with." After the arrival of the commissioners, this mysterious prisoner was tried for his contemplated crime, and condemned to suffer an extreme penalty in expiation. The next communication which the queen makes on the subject, is to tender her grateful thanks to the king for the permission which he had given her to grant a free pardon to the prisoner. The noble generosity of Marguerite's heart and her sympathy for the unfortunate reveals itself in every incident of her life. Her ready forgiveness of injuries, and the way in which she invariably rendered good for evil cannot be too highly extolled. But for the salutary influence which his sister exercised over the mind of the king, the annals of the reign of Francis would have been more deeply stained with blood. Hundreds of persons at various periods owed their lives to her persevering intercession—for to plead for the unfortunate appeared to be the recognised and noble privilege of the queen of Navarre. The affair of the bishop of Condom continued for some time longer to agitate the little court of Pau, when the proceedings were stayed by the translation of the turbulent prelate to the See of Blois,* while that of Condom was bestowed on Charles de Pisseleu, brother of the duchesse d'Estampes.

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* Suppl. Frar., Bibl. Roy., MS. No. 120.

The foreign policy of Francis I., meanwhile, suffered severe injury from the suspicions inspired by the ostentatious passage of Charles V. through France. The emperor had disavowed his promises; while the apparent cordiality subsisting between the two potent monarchs filled Europe with apprehension. The Venetian republic and the sultan Soliman II. felt aggrieved at the manner in which the king had broken treaties concluded at the period when his kingdom was menaced with ruin, to league with his ancient adversary. According to the secret treaty signed in 1536, between the king of France and the sultan, Francis had engaged to invade the Milanese, while the Turkish admiral blockaded the ports of Naples, and Soliman himself led his vast armies to subdue the kingdom of Hungary. Barbarossa and the fleet sailed accordingly for Italy, and ravaged the Neapolitan territories, slaying and carrying away into captivity more than half of the population of the various towns which submitted to the Crescent. The news of these calamities compelled the emperor to retreat from Provence; while Soliman, faithful to his engagements, marched into Hungary, gave battle and completely defeated the king of the Romans, near to the town of Esseg. The breaking up of the camp at Avignon, and the refusal of the French to follow the retreating army of the emperor was deeply resented by the sultan; while the news of the truce concluded at Nice, which was reported to be but the preliminary to the signature of a permanent treaty of peace, completed the alienation of Soliman from his reluctant ally. The sultan conceived that Francis had shamelessly deceived him; and had acted in defiance of international law by concluding a truce irrespective of the interests of his allies, thus leaving the Turks to sustain the weight of a war ostensibly undertaken by them at the solicitation and in defence of the king.

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* In 1542.

Perceiving how completely he had been duped by the emperor's artifices, and sensible of the policy of propitiating two such powerful allies as the Venetian republic—which had concluded a separate treaty of peace with the Turks—and the sultan Soliman, before the commencement of a fourth contest with the emperor, Francis secretly despatched a gentleman of his chamber, named Antonio Rinçone, and one César, a scion of the illustrious Genoese House of Fregosa, the members of which ranked amongst the most devoted adherents of the Valois in Italy. As Rinçone was a corpulent person, and unable to travel on horseback with requisite celerity, the ambassadors were commanded to take boat on the river Po as far as Venice. The nature of the instructions delivered to Rinçone and Fregosa set forth that the ambassadors were "perfectly to reassure the most Serene Republic and the sultan as to the purpose of the conventions concluded between Charles Quint and Francis I., which consisted simply and purely of a truce signed with the fullest intent of hereafter renewing hostilities." The king, moreover, congratulated the republic on the peace it had recently concluded with the Porte.

The departure of the ambassadors became immediately known to the emperor, so faithfully did he contrive, through his agents, to procure information of the proceedings of his rival. To obtain possession of the despatches of these ambassadors, whose instructions might furnish him with the plan of the future campaign, became the paramount desire of Charles. The emperor possessed not an officer more devoted to his interests and ready to perform his bidding for evil or for good, than the marquis del Guasto, governor of the Milanese. A plan was therefore concerted to assassinate the unfortunate French ambassadors on their journey down the Pô, and to seize their despatches. Guillaume du Bellay, one of the bravest warriors and most skilful diplomatists of France, had succeeded the maréchal d'Annebaut in the government of the conquered principality of Piedmont. His vigilance detected the scheme in contemplation for the murder of the ambassadors; and in great haste he sent to arrest their progress at Rivoli, where he joined them, attended by a powerful escort. Unfortunately, the ambassadors refused to credit Du Bellay's positive assertion that their lives were menaced; and they therefore declined to undertake the more fatiguing and difficult journey by land to Venice. Nevertheless, they prudently committed their secret despatches to the care of Du Bellay, who undertook to forward them safely. Fregosa and Rinçone therefore embarked with their suite in two boats, giving orders to their rowers to proceed down the river with all possible dispatch. During the first night the ambassadors pursued their route without molestation, and had nearly reached Casal, when they were suddenly attacked by two boats filled with armed soldiers from the garrison of Pavia. The boat containing the unfortunate ambassadors was surrounded; a sharp contest ensued, in the heat of which Fregosa and Rinçone fell mortally wounded, and were hurled overboard into the river, after search had been made for the despatches it was supposed they carried concealed about them.*

It had been undoubtedly by the express commands of the emperor that the ambassadors, whose missions might prove so adverse to his policy, were intercepted, and a bold attempt made to seize their papers; but we possess no such exact proofs that their abominable assassination was likewise decreed by Charles, notwithstanding the accusations of Du Bellay. It is rather to be supposed that the emperor, in issuing directions to the marquis del Guasto, was silent on the means of accomplishing the contemplated theft, and that the ambassadors were accidentally slain in the fray; as in those days human life, especially in Italy, was regarded as a thing very subordinate to the policy of princes.

The boat containing the suite of the ambassadors, meantime, made for the opposite shore of the river at the commencement of the attack, and during the heat of the combat the persons on board effected a safe landing and repaired to Turin to lay their statements of the outrage before the king's lieutenant. The men who had rowed the boats of the assailants, together with all the attendants on board the French barges who survived the attack, were seized by order of the marquis del Guasto and incarcerated in dungeons of the citadel of Pavia, in order to suppress evidence of the crime. Du Bellay, however, promptly, collected proof which showed that at any rate if the emperor were guiltless of the murder committed, the marquis del Guasto was directly cognizant of the deed. He therefore denounced the marquis to the emperor, and afterwards before the Diet of Ratisbon. Del Guasto at first flatly denied the charge; when the overwhelming evidence tendered by the king's lieutenant rendered it impossible for the marquis to persist in this denial, he palliated the deed by affirming "that Fregosa and Rinçone were deserters, rebels, and traitor subjects of the emperor, and as such merited punishment." He also affirmed that the death of the ambassadors was accidental; and arose from a fray which could not be anticipated between the soldiers and the crew of the boat. It was not attempted to deny the fact, that the seizure of the despatches committed by the king to his ambassadors was the cause of the outrage.*

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* Mém. de Du Bellay. Brantôme,—Capitaines Illustres. Vie du marquis del Guasto.

The wise precaution taken by Guillaume du Bellay to secure the despatches intrusted to Fregosa and Rinçone effectually foiled the schemes of Charles. With a dishonesty worthy only of the emperor and his ministers, a set of supposititious papers were however framed and distributed throughout Europe, purporting to be the genuine despatches of the murdered ambassadors. It was asserted that the packet had been found by some fishermen on the Pô, together with a key to the cipher in which their instructions were written. Francis, in these papers, was accused of the wildest schemes; a plan was there pretended to be revealed in which the king of France proposed a league with the State of Venice to conquer and partition the Imperial dominions in Italy; while he was made to offer the possession of Germany to Soliman II., a conquest to be achieved by the united strength of the French and Mahometan empires.† It was probably in allusion to these fabrications, unworthy of the emperor Charles, that Marguerite wrote thus to her brother: "Monseigneur, Mons. Bayard* has forwarded to me an account of the letter written by the emperor to the pope, which contains another of his accustomed falsehoods (*acoustumée mensonge*). In this, however, I rest content, for even a child might discern the truth. Were I as good an orator as I feel loyal, and assailed in this matter, there is not a single article the emperor has asserted that I could not refute with a minute accuracy, of which such slanderous assertions are not worthy."†

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* Mém. de Du Bellay.

† Ibid.

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* Gilbert Bayard, one of the king's principal secretaries of state.

† F. du Suppl. Fran., MSS. No. 133.

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CHAPTER X.

The character and acts of the new ministers chosen by Francis—Their plan for the campaign—Illness of queen Marguerite—She rejoins the court at St. Germain—Disgrace of the chancellor Poyet—The queen of Navarre joins his enemies—Poyet's sentence—His death—Expedition of Charles V. against Algiers—Military preparations in France—Dissensions of the court and the capital—Commencement of the campaign—Conquest of Luxembourg—The dauphin raises the siege of Perpignan—The king visits Nérac—His reception by the king of Navarre—Marguerite accompanies her brother to Bordeaux—Revolt of La Rochelle—Marguerite makes intercession for the rebels—The king repairs to La Rochelle—Terror of its inhabitants—Public harangue made by the king—His clemency—Queen Marguerite writes to congratulate her brother—She causes the king's harangue to be printed and distributed throughout France and Spain—The present which she sent to the king, with a poetical epistle—Answer returned to the queen by Francis—Queen Marguerite despatches a gentleman to the court of France to inquire after the health of the dauphin—Marot's psalmody—Patronized by the dauphin and by his consort—Illness and melancholy of the king—He finds consolation in the society of his sister—The king renews his negotiation with the Porte—Successful mission of the capitaine Paulin to Constantinople—Fears excited by the alliance of Francis with the Sultan—Manifestoes issued by king Francis—Oration made by the bishop of Valence before the Venetian senate—The emperor prepares for the campaign—His reconciliation with Henry VIII.—Their treaty—Excitement of Europe—Commencement of the war—Advance of the emperor into the Duchy of Cleves—The sack of the town of Duren—Submission of the duke of Cleves—His interview with the emperor—Speech made by Charles V. on this occasion—Treaty concluded between the duke of Cleves and the emperor—Demand made by the duke that his consort the princess Jane of Navarre may be sent to him—King Francis declines to permit the departure of his niece—Queen Marguerite's letter on the subject to her brother—Third protest made by the princess against her compulsory nuptials—Dissolution of her marriage—Siege of Landrecy—Its relief by the king in person—Retreat of the emperor—Correspondence of queen Marguerite with her brother—The Turkish fleet anchors in the harbour of Marseilles—Bombardment of the citadel of Nice—Barbarossa retires again to Marseilles—The departure of the Turkish admiral—Ravages committed by his armament on the coasts of Italy—Delicate health of queen Marguerite—She suffers from affections of the lungs—She is unable to remove from Mont de Marsan to Fontainebleau—Impatience manifested by the king—His correspondence with Marguerite—He sends her a crucifix and an epistle in verse—The queen's reply—Accouchement of the dauphiness—Joy of king Francis at the birth of his grandson—Jean Fernel—Letter written by queen Marguerite to her brother—The king visits the dauphiness—Request preferred by Catherine de Medici to the king—Precarious health of her infant son—Baptism of the young prince—The poet Pierre de Ronsard.

THE administration of the kingdom after the disgrace of Montmorency was committed to the cardinal de Tournon and the marshal d'Annebaut, the latter having been recalled from his command in Piedmont to assume office in the state. The new ministers were men of undoubted merit, but deficient in capacity for the conduct of the war about to break forth. The cardinal de Tournon carried the prejudices of the zealous churchman into political affairs; his first thought was for the aggrandizement of the papacy, while the glory and welfare of his royal master ever remained subordinate to this his dominant purpose. In an age when schism, infidelity, and the faith of Rome were each contending for mastery, it required a larger intellect and a wider liberality of spirit than the cardinal possessed, to reconcile the conflicting claims of the subjects and allies of France. The marshal d'Annebaut had on many occasions bravely served his country; he first signalized himself under the immediate auspices of Francis at the battle of Marignano—that glorious fight which the king still exultingly regarded as the most triumphant event of his reign.

The new ministers were scarcely installed in office before the menaced disgrace of another high dignitary of state again created uneasiness throughout the country. The chancellor Poyet, the advocate to whose eloquence the calamities of France might perhaps be traced, as it gained for the duchess d'Angoulême her famous suit against the constable de Bourbon, was evidently daily falling in disfavour with his royal master. The enmity of the admiral de Brion and of the duchesse d'Estampes was implacable; they first rendered the chancellor odious in the king's sight, by constantly recurring to the oppressive and illegal measures he had adopted to procure the condemnation of the admiral; they next successfully inspired Francis with contempt for Poyet by ridiculing the adulations and the cringing flatteries by which he sought to win back their favour. The fall of the chancellor, though resolved upon, was yet delayed: Francis, who had acted with passionate impulse in disgracing Montmorency, felt that at this critical juncture of affairs, the advent of the new ministry would be ushered in with almost insurmountable obstacles, if all his old servants were removed from their posts.

The plan of the campaign, meantime, was formed upon a different and more extensive scale. The new ministers resolved to inaugurate their administration by the adoption of a policy totally distinct from that wisely pursued by the constable de Montmorency. Instead of proceeding with the war in Piedmont, where conquest after conquest had crowned the efforts of the French generals, it was resolved to make a simultaneous attack upon Roussillon, Flanders, and the duchy of Luxembourg. To carry the war on the frontiers of Spain, and thus to attack the emperor in the very haven of his security and wealth, was a grand and ambitious scheme. The policy of Charles V., contrary to that of his grandfather, Ferdinand the Catholic, elevated the nobles of Castile at the expense of the middle orders. The revolt of the *communeros* had been repressed with unpitying severity at the commencement of Charles's reign; and so intimidated and dazzled were the various corporate bodies by the fortune, the glory, and the affability of their sovereign, that no subsequent risings of the cities of Spain disturbed the meditations of the emperor in his convent palace at Toledo. Yet the taxes were burdensome; and the gratuitous levies imposed from time to time on various districts excited secret discontent; while the rigour of the executive government in carrying into effect the arbitrary enactments of the privy council was inexorable. When the banner of the *fleur-de-lis* should be unfurled on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, was it not probable, therefore, that the chiefs of the Santa-Junta would fly to arms to assert their municipal liberties and their ancient *fueros;* and, assembling their scattered adherents, kindle civil war again in the centre of orthodox and Catholic Spain? Such was the thought of the French. A bold stroke was meditated by the privy council; but it was one, nevertheless, worth the venture.

By the capture of the duchy of Luxembourg, a way would be opened for the passage of the French armies into Germany, to join the princes of the league of Smalkalden, in revolt against the emperor; or to league with the Turk in subjecting both the symbols of the keys and of the cross beneath the sceptre of Mahomet. To afford a pretext for the invasion of the duchy of Luxembourg and the territory of Rousillon, a formal claim for the possession of these provinces was advanced by the crown of France. The complicated genealogies of the Valois and their collateral branches, rendered it easy to prefer a claim with much seeming plausibility on most territories in Europe; and subtle pleaders on such questions were always to be found at the bar of a nation whose principal nobles, with few exceptions, traced royal descents. Luxembourg, it was pretended, belonged to the crown of France, in virtue of a deed of cession formerly executed by its ancient princes, in case of the failure of their posterity, which its last sovereign had been unrighteously induced to revoke by the ancestors of the emperor, dukes Philip and Charles of Burgundy. While Rousillon, having been ceded to the Spanish crown by Charles VIII.—unwisely influenced thereto by his confessor, the famous Franciscan, Olivier Mailliard,* on certain conditions which had never been fulfilled—it was argued, therefore, that the cession remained null and void, and that Francis was justified in every attempt to recover a county usurped under such circumstances. Three large armies were therefore raised to commence the campaign. The first—consisting of 45,000 men, under the command of the dauphin, associated with the marshal d'Annebaut and Montpezat—was to march into Rousillon, and besiege Perpignan. The second—commanded by the duke of Orleans, having Claude duke de Guise, and François de Lorraine, his valiant son, as lieutenants—was to invade Luxembourg; while the army of Piedmont, destined to act in strict subordination to the other great *corps de bataille,* and to advance upon the Milanese or not as the success of the French arms indicated, was confided to the brave Guillaume du Bellay.

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* It was popularly reported that the stern monk showed to his royal penitent, Charles VIII., the soul of his father, Louis XI., suffering extreme torments in purgatory, for his unrighteous acquisition of the county of Rousillon. Mailliard engaged to effect the deliverance of the king when his son should have made restitution to the Spanish crown.

In the summer of this year, 1542, Marguerite gave birth prematurely at Pau to twins, an event which occasioned the queen and her husband severe affliction. This untoward accident completely dissipated Henry's hope of male offspring; and therefore rendered him doubly averse to the alliance which his only child had been compelled to contract with the duke of Cleves. The extreme anxiety displayed by Marguerite for her brother's affairs probably injured her health, which was never robust; and her activity in travelling from place to place throughout the principality, and the excitement of reviewing the garrisons of the fortresses she visited, proved highly injurious to the queen in her delicate condition. As soon as she was able to travel, the queen quitted Pau, and visited the court, which was then resident at St. Germain-en-Laye.

During Marguerite's brief sojourn at St. Germain, the fall of the chancellor was resolved upon. It was determined to transfer the great seal to Montholon, who for some little time had discharged the functions of attorney-general, with the most brilliant success. The hate of Madame d'Estampes against Poyet was, if possible, still more vindictive; and the failing health of the admiral de Brion, who was now confined to his chamber, in daily expectation of a release from his sufferings, enlisted the sympathy of all, and redoubled popular indignation at the chancellor's past subserviency to the passions of his royal master. It was the hand of the queen of Navarre, however, that removed the last prop upon which the tottering edifice of Poyet's favour rested.

The duchess d'Estampes had been in the habit of treating the chancellor with an insolent arrogance, derogatory to the dignity of his office. Poyet, who was well aware that Madame d'Estampes possessed the power she constantly threatened to exercise to his disadvantage, submissively endured her slights; and subjected himself to the ridicule of the court by his ignoble compliance with the caprice of the imperious favourite. It so happened that a partisan of Madame d'Estampes, named La Renaudie, being involved in a suit against Du Tillet, keeper of the registers of the parliament of Paris, which he was in danger of losing, applied to the duchess to procure for him letters patent under the great seal, transferring his cause from the jurisdiction of the parliament to that of the council of state. The duchess d'Estampes easily obtained the assent of the king; she therefore caused the requisite documents to be drawn, and sent them to Poyet, desiring him to sign them and affix the great seal. The chancellor, either shocked at the flagrant injustice of the procedure, or irritated at the little consideration displayed towards him, refused to comply with this peremptory request, unless certain modifications and omissions were made in the tenour of the document, which he took up a pen and indicated. La Renaudie reported to his patroness the refusal of the chancellor to seal the document, which the duchess took possession of again to lay before the king. Notwithstanding the insidious observations of the duchess on the insolence of the chancellor in presuming to make erasures in a document which had received the royal assent, Francis contented himself with reiterating the command he had before given, that the letters of evocation should immediately pass the great seal. The following day, therefore, Madame d'Estampes despatched La Renaudie to the chancellor, the bearer of a still more arrogant message, conveying the precise command of the king that the original document presented should be accepted without modification. It so happened that the queen of Navarre was sitting with Poyet when La Renaudie obtained his audience to deliver this message. Marguerite had personally visited the chancellor to witness his signature of letters patent which she had procured from the king for the pardon of one of her retainers who had been capitally convicted for the forcible abduction of a rich heiress. Stung by the affront he had received in the presence of the king's sister, the chancellor took the parchment from the hands of La Renaudie, and unfolding it before Marguerite, read aloud some of its clauses, adding: "You perceive, madame, the evil effect of the influence which is exercised by ladies at court. Not content with wielding a legitimate empire, they presume to violate the laws, and to dictate to magistrates, who are competent and skilful in the discharge of the duties of their office."* Unfortunately for the chancellor, Marguerite understood his remark as being personally addressed to herself, as she had been just insisting on the issue of a pardon to her retainer. She therefore retired in great displeasure, and reported Poyet's speech to her royal brother, complaining greatly of his insolence in daring to address her with such freedom. Madame d'Estampes and the consort of the admiral seconded with all their influence Marguerite's representations; and aggravated the king's anger by the subtle expression of indignant surprise that the queen of Navarre should have been treated with so little respect. The king was on the eve of departing for Argilly; yet the warrant for the arrest of the chancellor on a charge of malversation in his office was made out, and received the royal signature. Poyet's arrest took place at Argilly, August 2nd, 1542, whither he had accompanied the king, unsuspicious of the disgrace which awaited him. He was immediately transferred to the Bastille; and articles of impeachment were presented to the parliament of Paris, and accepted by that august body. Poyet's trial was most cruelly postponed at various intervals without regard to his age and infirmities. His public career on investigation, revealed instances of shameless corruption; while his servile deportment during the progress of the trial excited universal contempt. His sentence, which was only pronounced in 1545, condemned him to five years' imprisonment, and to the payment of a fine of one hundred thousand livres. Poyet immediately discharged the fine, and was thereupon dismissed from prison by the grace of the king. He survived his ruin and disgrace about four years; and died in abject poverty, in an upper apartment of his once splendid mansion, the Hotel de Nemours.*

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* Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique. Le Laboureur.—Vie du chancelier Poyet—Additions aux Memoires de Castelnau.

The emperor, meantime, notwithstanding the hostile attitude assumed by Francis, proceeded in person on an expedition against the Bey of Algiers, believing that the exhaustion of France was so complete, that some time must elapse before the king could put his threats into execution. The emperor sailed for Algiers on the 22nd of October, 1542. His fleet consisted of fifteen large ships of war, and of eighty-six vessels of various descriptions. Charles embarked on board this fleet with an army of 22,000 foot and 1,200 horse, and after a prosperous voyage he landed before Algiers, and laid siege to that city. Scarcely, however, were his preparations complete, when a violent tempest arose, and dispersed his fleet, sinking a number of the smaller vessels, laden with baggage and provision. The heats of the climate, and the great dearth of food which soon occurred, enfeebled the troops, and enabled several skirmishing parties from the city to gain a temporary advantage over Charles's trained and warlike bands. A feeling of depression soon predominated in the army, to such a degree, that Charles, seeing no prospect of a speedy reduction of the town of Algiers, thought proper to retreat, as his men were dying by hundreds of pestilential fevers and other disorders. He therefore re-embarked his army; but again the fury of the elements assailed the fleet, which was nearly destroyed, with the loss of all on board. The whole of the artillery was sunk; and twelve of his largest vessels of war were wrecked before the emperor reached the coast of Spain, where he landed in most pitiable plight.†

Francis heard of the emperor's retreat from Algiers just as his own military preparations were complete. Armies in a finer state of discipline, or commanded by more valiant generals, never assembled on the soil of France. Ample funds, also, to support the campaign, filled the royal exchequer; for Francis, grown provident by past adversity, himself organized the conduct of the war; and by his direction, ere a single military operation commenced, the towns brought their various contributions of money to the treasury, according as the rate of taxation had been fixed by the king in council. The utility and success of these politic measures were, however, thwarted as usual by the dissension of parties. The spirit of disunion which pervaded all ranks of society was the bane of the reign of Francis I. The contests of the parliament with the crown, and of the Sorbonne with the adherents of reform, and the consequent insubordination of both these bodies, and the fierceness with which they assailed the royal prerogative, diminished the reverence paid by the people for the sovereign, and afforded a precedent only too fatally imitated in after times. Scarcely had the perils to which the monarchy was exposed produced a temporary suspension of the theological feuds always agitating the capital, when private quarrels broke forth amongst the courtiers, raging with even more acrimonious bitterness in proportion as the interests they involved were limited and personal. The factions of Madame d'Estampes and of the Duchesse de Valentinois paralysed the court; such was the ungoverned hate subsisting between these two abandoned women, that neither patriotism nor their allegiance to the crown offered obstacle to the gratification of their animosity. Madame de Valentinois, however, was never guilty of acts of treason and ingratitude like the duchesse d'Estampes, whose passions originated and resolved themselves into most absolute selfishness. The dauphin lived on bad terms with his father, with his consort, with his brother the duke of Orleans, and with Madame d'Estampes, because all these persons were favoured by the king, who, with a jealousy greatly to be reprehended, looked coldly on the heir-apparent of his throne. The cabals of Montmorency and the admiral Chabot de Brion had for years convulsed the court; and a bitter rivalry existed between the members of the Houses of Lorraine, Guise, and Châtillon—nobles all of them potent in the science of war and in the arts of the cabinet. In the early feuds of these princes, there unconsciously lurked the spirit of antagonism in religious points, afterwards developed with such virulent animosity in succeeding reigns, when, as champions of reform and of the ancient ritual, the name of the head of the House of Guise and of that of Châtillon became the watchword of their respective parties.

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* Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique. Le Laboureur—Vie du chancelier Poyet—Additions aux Memoires de Castelnau.

† Du Bellay. Sandoval,—Hist. del Emp. Carlos V.

To complete the recital of the cabals which agitated this reign, the cardinal de Tournon was opposed with unrelenting animosity by the cardinal de Lorraine, a former favourite at court, but whose avidity had caused him to forfeit the esteem of his royal master; while the marshal d'Annebaud soon incurred the displeasure of Madame d'Estampes. The statesmen, however, whom Francis had disgraced were, unhappily for the tranquillity of the court, men whose pre-eminent abilities placed them far above competition from the rivals who succeeded to their place and power. The cardinal de Tournon had neither talent nor energy to render their ceaseless intrigues harmless to the state; nor yet had he the power to repress authoritatively their discontent. Such was the unhappy condition of the court of France on the breaking out of the fourth contest between Francis I. and the emperor.

The point of attack, meanwhile, selected for the army of Roussillon, under the nominal command of the dauphin, was vehemently debated in the council. Marguerite repeatedly urged her brother first to undertake the conquest of the kingdom of Navarre, which the king her husband offered to garrison and maintain, while the army, pursuing its victorious march, planting the white banner of France on the towers of the Alcázar of Madrid. The queen, whose vigilant guard on the frontiers of Béarn, had more than once disconcerted the emperor's projects, represented to the king the facility with which the fortress of Fuenterrabia might fall before his arms; and the rapid advance upon Pampluna, that his troops could afterwards easily achieve, probably in the midst of a rising of the whole population of Navarre, in favour of their ancient and popular princes. Marguerite's counsels were rejected by the cabinet, chiefly owing to the entreaties of Montpezat, who advised that the army in which he bore a joint command with d'Annebaut, should advance and invest the town of Perpignan; a step which was eventually decided upon. The army, under the command of the duke de Guise and his son, meantime entered Luxembourg, and achieved the most brilliant success; so that of all the duchy the single town of Thionville remained in the power of the emperor. The duke of Orleans gave signal proof of bravery, though the conduct of the war in reality remained with the Guises. The king himself quitted Lyons, and repaired to Montpellier to be nearer the seat of hostilities, and ready to assume the command of the army of Roussillon, in case the emperor in person presented himself to relieve Perpignan. A rumour that an engagement of this magnitude was about to take place, reaching the army in Luxembourg, the duke of Orleans rashly resigned his command, and took his departure for the south, resolved to share the honours of a battle with his brother the dauphin. Before he quitted Luxembourg, however, the duke committed the grave fault of despatching a division of the army to defend the frontiers of Champagne and Picardy; so that this diminished number of forces only enabled the duke de Guise to maintain a defensive warfare in the duchy, and subjected him to the mortification of witnessing the recapture of the town of Luxembourg by the Imperialists.*

Francis severely reprimanded his son for this inexcusable desertion of the post assigned to him; but the winter season having set in with unusual severity, the young prince arrived only in time to witness the retreat of the dauphin from before Perpignan. This reverse was the more mortifying to Henry, as he had desired to adopt the counsel of the queen of Navarre, and enter Spain by Fuenterrabia. The report which Montpezat made to the council of the dilapidated condition of the fortifications of Perpignan had not been realized; though in self-vindication the marshal declared that the procrastination displayed in acting upon his advice enabled the viceroy of Arragon to repair the works and thoroughly to revictual the place. The weight of Henry's resentment, and that of the queen of Navarre, fell, however, on Montpezat; who was disgraced and deprived of his command.† The army retired to Beziers for winter quarters; while the king, accompanied by the duke of Orleans, proceeded to Nérac to visit queen Marguerite; and the dauphin, indisposed and chagrined at the reverse his arms had sustained, withdrew to Fontainebleau.

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* Du Bellay.

† Montpezat was afterwards restored to the king's favour, and resumed his military career.

The king arrived at Nérac, on All Saints' Day, 1542.[*] He was magnificently entertained by the king of Navarre, and regaled with banquets, comedies, and joustings. Marguerite afterwards accompanied her brother to Bordeaux, where they made some sojourn.

During the residence of Francis at Bordeaux, intelligence reached him of the revolt of the town of La Rochelle, and of the mutinous refusal of its inhabitants to pay the war-tax levied on them. The bold Rochellois, like the inhabitants of Ghent, maltreated the royal commissioners, and closed the gates of their town against the entrance of a detachment of troops summoned to preserve order in the city by the Sieur de Burie. The impost which occasioned the revolt was a levy of 24 livres on the bushel of salt, which the Rochellois resisted with pertinacious determination. The *gabelle*, or duty on salt, was a tax peculiarly obnoxious to the inhabitants of the western districts of France; it was an impost subject to the arbitrary will of the sovereigns, and on many occasions this liberty had been grossly abused, as any extraordinary expenditure at court was too frequently defrayed by an arbitrary increase of the *gabelle*. The marriage festivities of the princess Jane of Navarre with the duke of Cleves were followed by a general rise of these duties; so that her nuptials were often alluded to under the soubriquet of *les noces salées*.[†] The discontent of the people of La Rochelle, however, broke out into seditious resistance of the impost, when, on occasion of the war, it was again augmented; and the count de Jarnac, governor of the town, in attempting to enforce order, narrowly escaped with his life.

Francis was extremely incensed when he heard of these violent proceedings, and departed from Bordeaux to punish the revolt in person. Before the king's departure, Marguerite earnestly implored mercy for the rebellious Rochellois, who, already intimidated by the report of their sovereign's displeasure, awaited his arrival in much apprehension. The king's fame was very precious in Marguerite's eyes; and she earnestly desired that his clement forgiveness of the revolt of La Rochelle might present a triumphant contrast to the severity of the emperor's conduct towards his subjects of Ghent. Besides, misfortune, whether the result of calamity or of crime, never appealed in vain to the compassionate heart of the queen of Navarre. Her life presents one long series of intercessions for the oppressed and miserable. Marguerite's cares seldom had self for their object; and her power over the king, which to the last day of his existence remained paramount, was successfully exerted for others, rather than to promote her own pecuniary profit and aggrandizement.

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[*] Favyn,—Hist de Navarre, liv. 13.

[†] Mezeray,—Abrég. Chron.

The king entered La Rochelle attended by a powerful body of troops, and accompanied by the bishop of Tulle and a numerous train. Silence and desolation reigned throughout the populous and affluent city. The prisons were filled with insurgents; troops paraded the streets; the public places were deserted, with the exception of the churches, which sheltered crowds of affrighted suppliants whose fathers and husbands awaited the punishment of their attempted revolt. On the first day of the year 1543, Francis admitted to his presence a deputation of the Rochellois, who appeared in most humble guise, bareheaded, to implore the clemency of their offended sovereign, and to confess the magnitude of their offence. In a speech of some length, the king forcibly represented to his repentant subjects the crime of which they had been guilty; then, contrary to the expectations of all, he assured the Rochellois of his pardon, with complete remission of the penalties, public as well as individual, which they had incurred. "I will never voluntarily inflict upon my subjects the penalties by which the emperor punished the revolt of Ghent, even for a less offence than you have committed; for his hands are now stained with the blood of his people, from which mine, by the mercy of God, are yet free. But the emperor by this rigour alienated their love and affection, while I hope, on the contrary, by the exercise of mercy and clemency, to confirm your loyalty and obedience," said the king in his address, which was singularly calculated to conciliate and restore the confidence of the Rochellois.[*] Some parts of the speech might have been drawn by the hand of Marguerite herself, so mild and benignant is the language used by the king, and different to the fiery vigour of former addresses, when, as had been so frequently the case during his reign, Francis dealt with insubordination and defiance of his authority. The air rang with acclamations and *vivas* when Francis concluded; the people, in the wildness of their joy at deliverance from terrible chastisements, threw themselves frantically at the king's feet, and implored blessings from Heaven on his head. The king afterwards dined in public, served at table by the chief inhabitants of La Rochelle: he dismissed his guards, and remained for some days the guest of the town. The noble magnanimity displayed by Francis secured the devoted adherence of the inhabitants of La Rochelle. Even the nominal fine of 200,000 francs imposed upon the citizens was given by the king to the chancellor Montholon, who, imitating the example set him by his royal master, returned it to the authorities of La Rochelle to be employed in building a hospital.

Marguerite exultingly applauded the conduct of her brother. The bishop of Tulle wrote to her an account of the audience which ushered in the New Year, and of the rapturous gratitude for their pardon displayed by the Rochellois. The bishop also enclosed a copy of the king's speech, which Marguerite immediately ordered to be printed and distributed throughout the territories of the king of Navarre. She also, in her zeal, caused many copies to be privately transmitted for circulation in Spain. "Monseigneur," wrote the queen, "the bishop of Tulle has written to me an account of the piteous supplication made to you by your unhappy subjects of La Rochelle, with your Christian and most merciful response; in reading which, methought I heard and saw you thus exercise your accustomed goodness and gentleness. I have caused so many copies of this your answer to be circulated here, in Spain, and elsewhere, that your humanity can henceforth be no more concealed from men than it is from Him whom I implore, monseigneur, to lengthen your life a century, if only for the honour and welfare of your realm."* The queen also sent her brother an epistle in verse, and an ivory figure of David, as a New Year's gift. Marguerite and her brother appear to have frequently interchanged presents of this description. The life of the saint whom the image represented always offered some parallel passage with the present circumstances of the receiver. Thus Marguerite sent the image of David, a type of gentleness and kingly clemency, to her brother. In her epistle she alluded thus to the Rochellois:—

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[*] Mém. de Du Bellay. Sleidan.

> "Demandez en à ceulx de La Rochelle,
> Desquels le pied estait jà sus l'échelle,
> Ceulx des marais, aussy ceulx de Bretagne,
> Y'a il nul qui de ce Roy se plaigne?
> Non, mais chacun à mon dire s'accorde
> Et le louant de sa misericorde,
> Sa grant douceur partout preschent et crient."†

The king, in return, despatched his secretary, Frotté, to his sister, with an answer to her epistle, also in verse, and a present of an image of St. Catherine. Francis thus addressed the queen, and alluded to the image:—

> "Je vous envoye, ô Sœur, une autre estreine
> Qui servira d'example à vostre peine,
> L'honneste Vierge m'a prié de vous dire,
> Qu'elle aydera par sa force réduire
> Vos ennemys, comme elle a fait les siens
> Jeunes de Foy, et par malice anciens."‡

During her sojourn at Bordeaux, Marguerite despatched a gentleman of her chamber, named Villemadon, to Fontainebleau, to inquire after the health of the dauphin, who was recovering from a severe illness, brought on by his recent chagrin and vexation of mind. It was about this period that the translation of the Psalms of David, and their versification in rhyme, by Clément Marot, was most popular at the court of France. Though Clément Marot was a Lutheran, and living a proscribed refugee in Béarn, his work was received with rapturous applause; and his poetic rendering of the Psalms of David delighted even the staunchest supporters of the papacy. Marot's psalmody soon superseded all other songs throughout the country: the ballads and profane ditties, unhappily then so prevalent in France, were for the time abandoned, and the words of the psalms were set to the music of the songs in lieu. Thus Diane de Poitiers sang the psalm commencing with the words, "*Du fond de ma pensée*," set to the popular dance tune, "Le Braule de Poitou;" and Catherine de Medici, in allusion to her husband's infidelities, profanely appropriated the sixth psalm, arranged to the air, "Des Bouffons," "*Neveuillez pas ô Sire, etc.*" Despite the clamours of the Sorbonne and the clergy, for long these psalms maintained their popularity; and the greatest lord of the court, to the meanest peasant, pursued his daily avocations humming one or other of these forbidden melodies, each selecting the psalm which appeared most suitable to his individual circumstances. The king himself, doubtless at the solicitation of queen Marguerite, condescended to accept the dedication of Marot's work, and avowed himself as one of the warmest upholders of the practice of singing the praise of God in the vernacular tongue. This vacillation of opinion on the part of the king did more harm than benefit to the cause of religion and order. It promoted animosity; as Francis, by never condemning one form of faith, without tendering speedily some proportionate overture to the opposing creed, never permitted controversy to be lulled; while neither of the parties believed in the religious sincerity of the king. This evil may be ascribed to the influence exercised by the queen of Navarre over her brother. The excitement so successfully kindled by the theologians of Paris against heresy, especially amongst the lower orders—persons, with few exceptions, so ignorant as not to recognise the prayers of their breviary when recited out of church—prevented the king from seeking diligently to reform the abuses of the Gallican Church. The reign of Francis resounded always with tumult and warfare; he had no leisure to devote to theological studies—the half of his life was absorbed in organizing his vast campaigns; the latter half in repairing the disasters of defeat. It is impossible to speculate on the extent of reform which might have been accomplished in the French churches, had the reign of Francis I. been a peaceful one. If the energy, the talent, and the wealth which the king possessed, had been expended on his home administration, the factions that convulsed France must have fallen beneath the vigorous exercise of his royal authority: as circumstances were, Francis often beholding the state on the eve of bankruptcy, while potent armies were gathering on his frontiers ready to invade the kingdom, felt that all his subjects must be conciliated, when every individual malcontent, or every tax refused, might occasion serious disasters.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 89., Bibl. Roy.
† Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses, epitre ii. p. 51.
‡ Ibid, epitre, p. 54.

Marot presented an abridgment of his psalmody to the emperor, who graciously received the poet, and acknowledged the gift by a donation of two hundred doubloons. He also requested Marot to translate into French verse the psalm "*Confitemini Domino;*" as the emperor declared that of all the Psalms of David it was his favourite.* At the court of France, all who possessed musical genius, meantime, employed themselves in composing airs for Marot's psalms. The dauphin was the author of a tune which was highly lauded; it was set to the words: "*Bienheureux est quiconque,*" which psalm, we are told, the young prince himself sung with unction.

The messenger sent by the queen of Navarre found Henry convalescent at Fontainebleau, and taking daily recreation with his consort Catherine and the duchesse de Valentinois, in hearing these psalms recited, and in setting them to music. Diane de Poitiers, perceiving that devotion was the dominant mood of her royal admirer, feigned great earnestness on religious matters. She procured a Bible in the French language, which she constantly carried at her girdle; and she read her Hours, as translated by the bishop of Senlis, the publication of which had so incensed the Sorbonne against Marguerite. In short, to the utter consternation of the zealous cardinal de Tournon, the court appeared about to become Lutheran. Villemadon, whom Marguerite had deputed to visit her nephew, himself records, in his letter to

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* Villemadon,—Lettre à Catherine de Medici'—Bayle.

Catherine de Medici, the enthusiasm then again pervading the French court for the reformed doctrines. He says: "The queen my mistress, being then with king Francis, offering intercessions for the seditious inhabitants of La Rochelle, sent me about this time to you, madame, to inquire after the health of the dauphin, who had been suffering from grievous malady. To my great surprise and content, I found the prince's health much amended, so that, the fever having diminished, he was enabled to join with his choristers in singing Marot's psalms, accompanied by flutes, viols, and spinettes. As soon as monseigneur perceived me, he beckoned me with his hand to approach; and, being aware of my passionate delight in music, and that I was a performer myself upon the guitar, he commanded that the psalm and the music to it, which he had himself composed, should be given me to carry home to my mistress. I did not fail, also, madame, to procure a copy of the psalm which you yourself had selected: it was this:—

> "Vers l'Eternal des opprcsez le Père
> Je m'en iray luy monstrant l'impropère
> Que l'on me faict, luy feray ma prière,
> A haulte voix qu'il ne jette en arrière,
> Mes piteux cris, car en luy seul j'espère.

When my mistress the queen of Navarre saw these psalms, and heard how diligently they were sung at court, even by Mons. le dauphin, she was lost in amazement. She then suddenly exclaimed: 'I know not where Madame la dauphine found this psalm "Vers l'Eternal;" for one more appropriate and expressive of her affliction could not have been composed. However, I prophesy that as God has put such holy desires into her heart, a year will not elapse before the eyes of the king will be rejoiced, and the base designs of the enemies of Madame la dauphine frustrated, by the happy birth of a son; for which blessing I have incessantly prayed.'" Whether Marguerite really put confidence in the sincerity of the pious zeal displayed by Catherine de Medici, and uttered this prophecy, rests solely on the authority of her gentleman of the chamber, Villemadon, himself an ardent reformer, who recounts the anecdote in a letter of remonstrance addressed to the powerful queen regent some years after the death of the queen of Navarre.

The king, meanwhile, returned to Paris, whither he was accompanied by Marguerite. Harassed by the cabals of the court, and the remonstrances of the turbulent Sorbonne on the psalm-singing propensities of his subjects, the king daily grew more morose and melancholy. The ravages of the cruel malady slowly consuming his life were visible in his attenuated figure, and the languor which succeeded the slightest exertion. Shut up in his private cabinet, Francis often, for days together, excluded from his presence all but his devoted sister. Marguerite, who had been the pride and sunshine of the king's youth, seemed to be the sole comfort of his declining years. Now and then the king was still roused to those arbitrary manifestations of will so frequently displayed in the earlier years of his reign; but, generally speaking, the wrangles of the disputatious universities ceased to inflame his resentment, or the ungrateful intrigues of the courtiers, who already descried the dawn of a new reign, to afford him uneasiness. Stern and inapproachable in the midst of his still brilliant court, the king governed the men whom he despised for their treachery and venality, but whom he had no intention to disgrace. Queen Eleanor lived in seclusion, seeing few personages excepting the Spanish ambassador and her priests, and taking no part in the feuds distracting the court. The dauphin seldom visited his father; as Madame d'Estampes carefully nourished the king's feelings of suspicion against his heir, in order to keep the dauphiness at a distance from the court, and also Madame de Valentinois, whose fascinations she dreaded.

The brilliant days of Francis and Marguerite were over: pain, dissension, and reverses clouded the termination of their career, which had dawned with unparalleled prosperity. Death had cut off the two fairest of the children of queen Claude—the young dauphin Francis, the pride and hope of the nation, and the graceful princess Madelaine, queen of Scotland. While the king mourned the premature deaths of his favourite children, the image of his first gentle and devoted consort, whose malady had been accelerated by his heartless neglect, must have risen in his mind with remorseful reproach. All had passed away—Louise de Savoye, Bourbon, Vendôme, La Trimouille, Brion, Duprat; over these and countless other friends also the grave had closed; or, like Montmorency, a moral death separated them from their royal master. It must have been an awful thought to Francis, amid the desolation of his declining years, to reflect that, from his own domestic misconduct and dissolute morals, the calamities chiefly sprang which afflicted him and the country at large; and that the dissensions of his children and the profligate lives of his two sons might be chargeable, in great measure, to the same evil example.

After the assassination of Rinçone and Fregosa, Francis despatched another envoy to Constantinople to make his peace with the Porte. A young officer named Paulin Iscalin des Aimars was the ambassador selected by the king for this perilous mission. The capitaine Paulin, who was ennobled for his eminent services by the title of baron de la Garde, possessed a most insinuating address, united to a daring and intelligence equal to every emergency. This young officer rose from the ranks of the army of Savoy, and his parents occupied the humblest station in life. His courage, and the aptitude he displayed in the profession of arms recommended him to the notice of Guillaume du Bellay, by whom he was presented to the king as one possessing the requisite qualifications for the important mission contemplated.* When Paulin arrived at Constantinople, he found it impossible to obtain audience of the sultan, or of any of the Turkish Divan. Soliman had been induced, by the misrepresentations of the emperor, to regard the conduct pursued towards him by Francis during the last campaign as treacherous, dishonourable, and worthy only, as he said, of Christian politics. He declared his firm belief that the king of France and the emperor had confederated together to deceive him, in order to destroy the Mussulman power; and he therefore declined to listen to any overtures except at the head of a victorious army. The ambassador was even secretly warned to escape as quickly as possible from the Ottoman territories if he had regard for his life. Paulin, however, exulted in the peril and difficulties of his mission; with the art of the most experienced diplomatist he applied to some of the principal officers of the court, and gradually conducted his negotiations with such dexterity, that at length he obtained a promise of audience from the sultan himself. This once accomplished, the rest of his task proved comparatively easy. With eloquence and force Paulin unfolded the wrongs his master had endured at the hands of the emperor; he reverted to the scandalous libels disseminated throughout Europe by Charles's agents; so that Soliman, who was a prince of great penetration and sagacity, perceived that he had too hastily condemned the conduct of Francis, especially after the ambassador detailed the emperor's faithless evasion of the solemn promises he had made the king when traversing France. The Turkish emperor, who had vowed eternal animosity to the House of Hapsburg, was induced again eagerly to espouse the quarrel of Francis. He therefore replied, that the year was too far advanced for the commencement of military operations, but that early the following season he would not fail to comply with the desire of the king his brother and ally.

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* Mém. de Du Bellay.

The emperor soon obtained accurate information of the proceedings of the capitaine Paulin at the Porte. The peril to which his dominions became exposed by this alliance between the Porte and the French, increased the acrimony of his protest against the scandal of a treaty offensive and defensive entered into by a Christian power with the Infidels. His harangues at the Diet of Spires, and those of his ministers, branded the king of France as a prince, the friend and supporter of heresy on the Continent, whose conscience was hardened, and who sacrificed all things for the sake of expediency. He represented the king as one day a Huguenot; the next, a fiery champion of the Romish Church, and the cruel persecutor of his subjects; then the emperor declared, with a sarcasm not the less keen for its apparent truth, that Francis under pressure of a fresh political necessity, was ready to sacrifice both St. Peter and Luther to the crescent of Mahomet. The partisans of Charles extolled the noble enthusiasm of their imperial master for the true faith, which he had ever consistently supported; and they appealed, in testimony of their assertions, to the two separate expeditions he had taken to Tunis and Algiers, imbued with the zealous spirit animating the ancient crusaders, to overthrow the Mahometan dominion in Africa.

The effect of the alliance of Francis with Soliman II., despite the immense accession of strength infused into the armaments of France, was decidedly inimical to the success of his arms. The ravages which had been before committed in Hungary and on the coasts of Europe by the Turks, inspired unconquerable dread; the population of innumerable districts had fallen beneath the Turkish scimitar like wheat under the sickle of the reaper; and neither the promises of the Infidels, nor their abundant wealth reassured the people, or removed the fear that the march of the Mussulmen through their territories would not be signalized by the same bloody massacres, and by similar desecration of their churches. The seraglios of Constantinople, Algiers, and Tunis were peopled by countless unhappy Christian slaves; for in many of the devastated districts in Germany, as well as on the coasts of Italy and Sicily, the women had been assembled *en masse*, and the younger and most beautiful selected, and forcibly carried on board the fleets of the invaders to horrible captivity: yet the fathers, brothers, and husbands of the miserable captives were summoned by the manifestos of the king of France to embrace the savage perpetrators of these outrages as brothers in arms, confederated to destroy the only power, that of the House of Hapsburg, which had afforded them temporary defence against Soliman and his legions.

Francis employed the most eloquent men in his dominions to refute the emperor's statements, and to explain the true aim of his engagements with the Turks. The learned men whom Marguerite and her brother protected returned their debt of gratitude to their liberal patrons on many a grave emergency; and the manifestos put forth by Francis possess a force and precision which is in vain looked for in similar documents emanating from the ministers of Charles. The celebrated Jean de Montluc, bishop of Valence, who owed his emancipation from the obscurity of a monastery solely to the enlightened judgment of the queen of Navarre, powerfully served his royal master's cause. In the science of the orator the bishop of Valence had, perhaps, no rival in France, except the cardinal du Bellay, the youngest of that illustrious triad of brothers, whose military and literary attainments caused it to be said, that all the glory to be derived from the successful cultivation of science and arms was concentrated in the House of du Bellay. The summary of all the state documents published at this period by Francis, cannot be better comprised than in the words of the bishop of Valence, who was sent by Francis to explain his policy to the Venetian republic some months subsequently to this period of our history. The oration is one of singular force and terseness, calculated to make a profound impression on a senate composed of sober, practical men, not to be won by the arts of rhetoric. Montluc skilfully opened his address by commenting on the fact that the emperor himself had offered to become tributary to the Porte for the kingdom of Hungary and its adjacent territory, to the amount of 50,000 ducats annually, an offer the sultan had rejected.* He then after further argument continued thus: "I believe that I have now, most Serene Princes, clearly explained to you, and offered confirmation by evident reason and certain argument, that the king, without prejudice to his name and title of 'Most Christian,' accepted the succours sent by the Grand Seignior; and secondly, that this aid has been more advantageous than hurtful to Christendom. I will therefore now add a third argument with all the brevity which so important a matter permits; it is this, *that the king's majesty retained these succours not out of ambition to dominate over Europe, not to avenge himself for the injuries he has received, not to recover that which has been so unjustly usurped from his royal crown, but for the sole purpose of defending his kingdom.* I repeat again, most illustrious lords, that the king accepted this aid to defend his crown and kingdom, which the emperor menaced by open violence, by secret plots, by private intrigue, and sought to ruin by a treachery not to be palliated. Yet the emperor's ministers, as if they spoke in irony, are not ashamed to maintain that the august majesty of the emperor never waged war upon the kingdom of France, but for the express purpose of dissolving the alliance and friendship which, it is asserted, exist between the king's majesty and the Grand Seignior. Oh, for their tender consciences! Oh, for their saintly assertions! Such statements may probably confound foolish and ignorant persons, but they fail in convincing you, most illustrious lords, who—using your accustomed admirable prudence and discrimination even before I addressed you—appealing to your consciences and judgments, detected and acted upon the truth, knowing well that the true cause of the war is a design on the part of the emperor to ruin the kingdom of France—a kingdom which for the last thousand years and more has been the haven and refuge of the afflicted and oppressed."* The bishop of Valence then recapitulated every act of hostility committed by the emperor against the realm of France from the accession of Francis, dissecting Charles's motives with admirable dexterity and point. He alluded to the assassination of the dauphin Francis, a crime which he distinctly stated was perpetrated "*par les corruptions de l'empereur.*"

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* Ribier,—Lettres et Mémoires d'Etat., t. i.

The eloquence and fervour of the bishop of Valence, though it pacified the clamorous remonstrances of the Venetian republic at seeing the Turkish flag waving over the waters of the Mediterranean, did not entirely subdue their disapprobation of the alliance contracted by Francis, which, in contradiction to previous acts of the senate, it was declared that no peril, however grave, could justify. Such, besides, was the general fiat given by the potentates of Europe; the numerous aggressive acts of the emperor were forgotten, as was also the necessity of France, in the universal dismay occasioned by the impending irruption of Soliman's hordes of infidels over the Continent. The emperor, on the contrary, assumed the proud position of defender of the Church and guardian of German unity and nationality. The calumnious reports, meanwhile, of the marquis del Guasto, which it was stated he had discovered in the despatches of Rinçone and Fregosa, were again propagated throughout the dominion of the emperor. Princes therefore, professing both the Roman Catholic and reformed faiths, united with the wealthy mercantile and free cities of Germany, in assembling under the standard of the Hapsburg to defend their liberties, their commerce, and the integrity of the great German confederation from the ambitious designs of the French and Turkish monarchs.

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* Harangue de Jean de Montluc, Evêque de Valence, aux Vénitiens.

The preparations made by the emperor were on a gigantic scale, so as to testify the importance which he attached to this fourth and final struggle with his ancient adversary. The Spanish Cortés entered with enthusiasm into the war, and voted the emperor a supply of four millions of golden ducats. The states of the Netherlands furnished him also with immense levies in money and soldiers; the cities of Germany subscribed largely to the fund for the national defence. The emperor landed at Genoa, and after a brief sojourn in Italy, where he had an interview with pope Paul at Busset, he proceeded to Spires. The *chef-d'œuvre* of the emperor's policy at this critical juncture, however, was his reconciliation with Henry VIII., king of England. The determination with which Francis maintained his alliance with Scotland gave great offence to his old and favourite ally, Henry. Twice Francis had bestowed French princesses in marriage on James V., even after he knew that one of these ladies* was earnestly demanded in marriage by the king of England himself. After the battle of Solway, and the death of king James, Francis opposed the policy of the English monarch in Scotland, and thwarted his desire that James's only daughter and heiress, Mary Stuart, then a babe of a few months old, should be affianced to the prince of Wales. Debates also had arisen relative to the line of frontier which divided the district of Calais from the dominions of Francis. Henry, moreover, felt extreme resentment at certain sarcastic speeches which it was reported to him the king of France had indulged in respecting his corpulent figure, and his numerous wives. A treaty between the emperor and the king of England was therefore signed in London, Feb. 11th, 1543, in which the two monarchs agreed to send ambassadors to admonish the king of France to relinquish his alliance with the Turks, to desist from hostilities against the emperor, and to pay the debt he owed to the English monarch. In case of the refusal of Francis to comply with this peremptory requisition, it was decreed that a merciless war should be levied on his subjects and kingdoms; and that neither peace nor truce should be granted him until Henry had been put in possession of the duchies of Normandy and Guyenne, and the emperor of the duchy of Burgundy, with the towns of Abbeville, Roye, Corbie, Ham, and St. Quentin. Francis observed, on receiving this formidable declaration of war, "that he readily believed the emperor and the king of England designed to enter his kingdom, but he concluded they had not been bold enough to swear a solemn oath not to quit it again until they had executed their threats."

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* Marie de Lorraine, duchess dowager of Longueville, eldest daughter of Claude, duke de Guise

In the midst of the violent agitation of Europe, the pope sent legates to open the ardently desired general council in the town of Trent. The panic was so great; and the peril from the fury of factions, and the devastating inroads of the Mussulmans, appeared so undefined, yet imminent, that few prelates obeyed the papal summons. The fierce population of the German states, so long trained to arms, advocated nothing but war and bloodshed; the worst passions of the people had been roused by the violent manifestoes dispersed throughout the country, and they eagerly demanded the combat instead of an assemblage of fractious prelates. The swords of his Roman Catholic, Lutheran, and Anabaptist subjects leaped from their scabbards on the summons of the emperor; Spanish, Fleming, Walloon, and English levies swelled the ranks of his armies; every shade of the political and religious opinions, from which resulted the social desolation of Germany, had its representatives there—the council was postponed, and the exasperation of parties found vent in warfare.

The military operations of France were first to be directed for the consolidation of the power of the king over the duchy of Luxembourg; and next for the relief of the duke of Cleves, the husband of the princess Jane of Navarre. Marguerite's solicitude was extreme for her son-in-law; and she frequently importuned her brother to send the duke succour. Relying on the aid of France, the troops of the duke of Cleves, under the command of Martin Van Rossem, ravaged the province of Brabant, and even menaced the town of Antwerp. Such temerity, displayed by a vassal of the empire exasperated Charles, and he vowed, "*Qu'il quitteroit plutôt sa couronne que de laisser au duc, un pouce de terre.*"* Instead of hastening to the relief of his ally, Francis, who took the command of his army in person, persisted in perfecting the conquest of the duchy of Luxembourg. The king commanded stupendous fortifications to be reconstructed at Landrecy; and while part of the army was employed in this task, under the immediate superintendence of Francis, the dauphin captured several important fortresses, and pushed his conquests to the borders of the provinces of Hainault and Brabant. When the fortifications of Landrecy were nearly complete, the news reached Francis of the advance of the Imperial army into the duchy of Cleves.

Charles's army consisted of 40,000 infantry and 8,000 horse, all veteran soldiers, in the highest state of discipline, and animated by a spirit of religious fanaticism which rendered them reckless of life, and submissive to the generals who were leading them to encounter the armies of the enemy of Christendom. Attacked by the emperor in person, at the head of such an army, the defeat of the duke of Cleves might be regarded as a certain event; yet Francis made no effort to save a prince his ally, and the vassal of the crown of France, which the duke had become in virtue of his marriage with Jeanne de Navarre. The intentions of the king, nevertheless, were recently expressed in favour of the duke; and Francis had even desired his sister to make preparation for the sudden departure of her daughter, as he wished to present the princess himself to the duke of Cleves. Disunion, however, reigned in the armies of France; the dauphin held there the second command, and the misunderstanding subsisting between the king and his son was notorious. The representatives of the great Houses of Guise, Lorraine, Bourbon, Châtillon, and Tournon, carried each of them their animosities and partisanships to the camp. Francis no longer possessed the energy of youth and health; his ardent worship of military renown was subdued by the agony he endured from the malady destroying his life. In the early part of his reign, a single frown, or one royal act of vigorous authority, would have suppressed individual faction, and have awed the disaffected. Francis, ill, and sick at heart, probably now yielded in despair before the formidable intrigues of his courtiers.

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* M. de Martin du Bellay.

At the head of his army the emperor advanced, and laid siege to Dueren, a large town of the duchy of Cleves. The inhabitants offered a valiant resistance, and for some time held in check the overwhelming forces of their assailant. By some strange misconception, which, after the emperor's fiery oratory at the late diet of Spires, appears incomprehensible, the people of Dueren believed that Charles had perished during his perilous voyage from Algiers; and that the general in command of the besieging army had assumed the Imperial title for political purposes. When the town, therefore, was summoned to surrender in the emperor's name, the inhabitants flippantly replied, "that the Imperialists must take them for fools and simpletons to make such a demand, when it was well known to the inhabitants of Dueren that the emperor Charles had long served as food to the fishes of the ocean."

The people of Dueren expiated their incredulity in torrents of blood. The town was taken by assault, and the greater part of its inhabitants fell in the cruel massacre which ensued. Ruremonde, and several other towns of the duchy, intimidated by the severe chastisement inflicted on Dueren, hastened to send their keys to the invincible emperor. Charles graciously accepted their submission, and then marched to besiege Venloo, a city second in importance in the duchy. Brabant, meantime, returned to its obedience to the emperor; and Guelderland, the territory which had occasioned the contest, hastened to submit. The unfortunate duke of Cleves, therefore, having exhausted his military resources, was reduced to the choice of two alternatives: he might either tender unqualified submission to the conqueror, and implore the restitution of his heritage; or throw himself upon the protection of the king of France, claim from him his bride, the princess of Navarre, and wait until the arms of France put him again in possession of his duchy. If duke William had possessed the spirit of a hero, or had he kept even loyal fidelity to the young princess whom he had espoused in defiance of her tears and protests, he would have adopted this resource. But instead of displaying fortitude in his reverses, and a dignity which at least commands respect, Marguerite's son-in-law abandoned himself to despair. The duke's ministers were inspired also with the same craven fear; by their counsels their master, casting aside every outward token of royal or military rank, proceeded with thirteen attendants to the Imperial camp at Venloo, and requested admission to the presence of the emperor.

The duke was treated at the camp with scorn and indifference; he was compelled to wait several hours in the Imperial antechamber, exposed to the jests and ridicule of Charles's officers. At length a chamberlain brought him a summons to the presence of his incensed sovereign, to whom he was presented by the duke of Brunswick. Charles received the duke seated on a chair of state, arrayed in his imperial robes, the crown on his head, and the sceptre in his hand. The frown of offended majesty which darkened the emperor's brow as his rebel vassal entered his august presence, struck terror into the coward heart of the duke of Cleves. Kneeling, and almost prostrate at the foot of the throne, the duke exclaimed: "Most august emperor, I come to throw myself at your feet, to accept whatever chastisement it may please you to inflict for my past sins; or to receive from your clemency a hope, however faint it may be, of pardon and grace." Charles allowed some moments to elapse, and then replied in a voice of stern disdain: "If your transgressions were not heinous as they are, my natural clemency of disposition would not permit me to witness your humiliation without feelings of compassion. You may yourself judge how deeply your late felonious acts have incensed me, when I have sworn in the presence of my officers never to pardon you: not from a feeling of revenge, but to vindicate and maintain the honour and the majesty of the empire, which you have violated, and to afford a salutary warning to others never to imitate your evil example. Nevertheless, I am willing to fail in the strict observance of my oath, rather than to withhold from you my clemency; although I should violate no principle of justice did I avenge myself by inflicting upon you personal chastisement: judge, therefore, of my goodness displayed in your favour, when I, a strict observer of my plighted word, consent to forego my solemn vow, in order to pardon your crime."* A few seconds again elapsed to allow this imperial objurgation to produce its effect; then the emperor with a smile stretched forth his hand to raise the duke from his humble attitude. The same day, September 7th, Charles dictated the conditions upon which alone he would reinstate the duke. The first article stipulated that the duke of Cleves should return to the profession and public exercise of the Romish faith, and restore that religion to its ancient pre-eminence over the duchy, *and engage to renounce his alliance with the king of France.* The treaty further decreed the cession of the provinces of Guelderland and Zutphen to the empire; and that the duke should never sign any convention whatsoever, with a foreign power, which did not include the emperor and his brother Ferdinand, king of the Romans. The troops of the duchy of Cleves were to be incorporated in the Imperial army, to serve in the pending war against France; and as a guarantee for the punctual performance of these articles, the two largest fortresses in the duchy—the castles of Heinsberg and Sittard should for the following ten years be garrisoned by the emperor's troops.† As far as Charles was personally concerned, he displayed much clemency in his treatment of the duke, whose revolt might have produced disastrous consequences throughout the empire: he only compelled him to renounce the reformed faith and the friendship and alliance of Francis I. The meanness of the submission offered by the duke of Cleves, and the ready eagerness with which he repudiated the ties of alliance which bound him to the royal House of Valois, and even consented to wage war on the monarch who had afforded him so liberal a protection in his hour of need, and had bestowed upon him his own niece in marriage, the richest heiress in France, justifies the aversion displayed towards him by the princess Jane.

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* Sandoval,—Hist. de la Vida del Emp. Carlos V.

† Sandoval.

In obedience, meantime, to the mandate of the king, the princess Jane, accompanied by her father, quitted Pau, to join the royal camp in Luxembourg, that Francis might present her to her betrothed husband the duke of Cleves. It was with tears and profound grief that Jane prepared to leave her native land; for her dislike of the duke had augmented, if possible, during her separation from him. The news of his defection from her royal uncle's cause; and the arrival of the courier despatched by Francis to arrest her progress at Soissons, filled the young princess with the liveliest joy and hope. Instead of proceeding to Aix, Jane therefore retired to Fontainebleau, where queen Eleanor and the dauphiness were sojourning. The duke of Cleves soon after the signature of his treaty with the emperor wrote to excuse his act to the king, alleging, with great truth, that to the king's delay in Luxembourg might be attributed Charles's successful invasion of the duchy of Cleves; and by advising their royal master to such a proceeding, the French ministry had given him evident proof of their indifference to his interests. Finally, the duke demanded that his consort the princess Jane of Navarre might be conducted without delay to Aix-la-Chapelle, according to the agreement in her marriage contract. This request of course the king thought proper to refuse; though Francis communicated previously with his sister. Marguerite expressed great indignation at the pusillanimity of the duke; and doubtless his change of religion displeased her. The vehement assurances of the poor young princess, "that she should die of grief if compelled to rejoin the duke of Cleves," met now with more pity and attention from her royal mother and her uncle; and her spirited protests, which before had been pronounced so contumacious, became documents of weight and moment in their eyes, when Francis impetuously declared that no vassal of the emperor's should receive investiture of a fief appertaining to the French crown. The following letter was written by queen Marguerite in reply to that in which the king communicated to her the submission of the duke of Cleves to Charles V. Francis, in the same letter, likewise informed his sister of the advance of the emperor, at the head of an army of 50,000 men, to invest the town of Landrecy; and of his resolve to relieve the place, or else to offer battle to the Imperialists.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO FRANCIS I.*

"Monseigneur,—I cannot express to you my distress when on reading the letter which it pleased you to write to me, I find that it is your intention to relieve Landrecy; or if the emperor seeks to oppose hinderance, to offer him battle. This is, indeed, sorrowful news, and so heavy for me to bear, that unless I had hope in Christ I could not support it; for knowing your valiant heart, I feel assured that you will shrink from no peril, and that your sense of honour will vanquish alike every counsel or caution whatever. Therefore, monseigneur, perceiving that in nothing can I serve you in this world, I will prostrate myself at the feet of Him, out of love for whom the Eternal Father pities our infirmities; nor will I cease my supplications until it shall please Him to give your poor subjects and servants assurance of your safety and triumph. Although I am firmly persuaded that the issue of this undertaking will redound to your honour and advantage, I have so keen a dread that your health may suffer, and that risk may happen to what you love best,† that I am certain there is not a pioneer in your camp whose body endures greater weariness than I suffer mentally. May the Lord God of battles be your refuge and shield!

"Amid so many urgent affairs, monseigneur, I perceive that you have not forgotten us; nor have you omitted to write to me word what reply it has pleased you to make to the communication you have recently received from M. de Cleves, as well as to give permission to the king of Navarre and myself, to avow before God, and according to our consciences all that we know concerning this marriage. But if this said duke of Cleves had borne you the fidelity which he owed you, and that I expected from him, never would we have revealed this matter; for we would rather have seen our daughter die, as she protested she should do, than prevent her from repairing to the spot where we believed she could render you service. But as this said duke has proved so unfortunate, (as I read by the report of his proceedings which you sent me by one of your maitres d'hôtel,) or rather as the king of Navarre and all our loyal servants declare, so infamous and vile, we have resolved no longer to withhold the truth of this matter,‡ in order to break the bond which unites our daughter as little in reality to this said duke of Cleves, as it binds me to the emperor. I can take God to witness, monseigneur, this, my solemn affirmation, as you will read in the paper which I send to Frotté,* on purpose, monseigneur, that you may add thereto, or suppress as best suits your service—to promote which, even as at first I ignorantly besought you to accomplish this marriage, hiding from you the wishes of my daughter, even so I now very humbly entreat you to give us your aid in restoring her to the same liberty in the presence of the Church, and of men, as I know that she possesses in the sight of God. I would rather see my daughter in her grave, than know her to be in the power of a man who has deceived you, and inflicted so foul a blot on his own honour; for we exist only to serve you, monseigneur, upon whom our own lives depend; to preserve which, I pray that the Almighty may keep you, and restore you to us in health, peace, and contentment, and that He will mercifully cause me ere long to hear the joyous words—the king has won a great victory; or, the king has achieved a happy peace!

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., Bibl. Roy., MS. No. 44.

† The king's honour.

‡ That the ceremony performed at Chatelherault could only be regarded as a solemn betrothal, which might easily be dissolved, and was therefore no marriage at all.

"Your very humble and very obedient subject and *mignonne*,

"MARGUERITE."

The final settlement of the affair relative to the marriage of the princess Jane of Navarre with the Duke of Cleves was postponed, in consequence of the urgency of military operations, until the latter end of the year 1545; both parties, meantime, presenting separate suits to the Holy See, praying for the dissolution of the nuptials, and affirming on oath that, on account of the tender age of the princess, the ceremonies performed at Chatelherault ought only to be regarded in the light of a betrothal. The princess energetically pursued measures to free herself from an odious alliance; possibly, Jane at this period may have been captivated by the homage of the young duke de Vendôme, whose consort she subsequently became.

The princess Jane renewed her protest against these nuptials during the following year at Alençon, whither she accompanied her royal mother; and again on Easter Day of the year 1545, with circumstances of great solemnity, as this document was required to be forwarded to Rome. The young princess was again an inmate of the abode she disliked so heartily, the gloomy castle of Plessis-les-Tours. The ceremony took place after high mass on Easter Sunday, April 5, 1545, which was celebrated in the chapel of the castle, in the presence of a numerous assemblage, comprehending the cardinal de Tournon, the count de St. Maurice the imperial ambassador, the archbishop of Vienne, the bishops of Coutances and d'Angoulême, Madame de Silly, baillive de Caen, Pierre du Chatel bishop of Maçon, and many other eminent personages. After the termination of mass, the princess advanced, and standing in the centre of the chapel, addressed the august assemblage in these words: "Messeigneurs, I have already protested against, and caused declarations to be put on record concerning the marriage which it was once wished to contract between Monsieur the duke of Cleves, and myself. I furthermore declare, in the presence of you all, messeigneurs, the cardinal, archbishop, and bishops here assembled, that it is my wish and desire to persevere in those my said declarations and protests, and that I persist in them, and will never retract. My lords, in order the better to inform you of my will and intent, I have drawn up a memorial and signed it with my own hand. This memorial and protest I am about now to read to you; and, my lords, by that holy sacrament I am about to receive, I swear and affirm, that what is here written contains nothing but the truth, in all which things I steadily persist." With a self-possession that commanded the admiration of all, the princess unfolded a sheet of paper which she held in her hand, and distinctly read the document, which contained a recapitulation of all that she had before inserted in her previous protests. Jane then laying her hand upon an open missal presented to her by one of the prelates, took a solemn oath that all she had read and signed was the truth; she afterwards delivered with her own hand the documents to the cardinal de Tournon, probably for transmission to Rome.* A few months afterwards pope Paul issued a decree annulling the marriage, and permitting the parties to contract a fresh alliance. "Then," says the quaint old historian, Olhagaray,† "the visage of our princess Jeanne grew serene again, her deportment became cheerful, and she consoled herself as best she might; for it appeared very grievous to her to quit France to become the spouse of a simple duke, when she could choose amongst the greatest princes of the blood royal; in fact, the emperor mightily desired to obtain her for his son Philip, and would have bestowed great advantages on our king Henry her father; who nevertheless refused to consent to an alliance so hurtful to the crown of France, or still less to have it believed that he desired such an event." The duke of Cleves, with that littleness of character which induced him to sue to the emperor on his knees for pardon, seconded with most unseemly warmth the efforts of the king and queen of Navarre to obtain a dissolution of their daughter's marriage. The duke's contentment at his union with the princess of Navarre had been severely impaired when Marguerite's condition seemed to render it possible that a male heir might still be born to inherit Henry's principalities; an event which was long deemed hopeless from the delicate condition of the queen's health. The duke of Cleves subsequently espoused the archduchess Mary, daughter of the king of the Romans.*

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* The king's secretary.

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* Papiers d'Etat du Cardinal Granville, t. 3. Docum. 30.

† Hist. de Foix, Béarn, et Navarre.

The emperor, meanwhile, advanced and invested Landrecy. The garrison was commanded by two of the bravest officers in the French army—the Sieurs La Lande and d'Essé. The siege was carried on with determined vigour; but the fortifications which the king caused to be constructed proved impregnable to assault. Charles, who commanded his army in person, then resolved to starve the garrison; and directed a close blockade of every avenue leading to the town. The winter had set in with unusual severity, and both the besiegers and the besieged endured terrible hardship. The provisions were nearly exhausted in the town; and disaffection followed, the usual consequence of dearth and sickness in a garrison. La Lande at length found means to communicate his situation to the king, who hastened to the relief of the garrison. The unexpected approach of the royal army was signified to the inhabitants of Landrecy by a general salute of artillery, which struck dismay and astonishment into the hosts of the Imperialists. The emperor, anticipating that the king would offer him battle, drew part of his army from before Landrecy, and prepared for combat; but while a division of his troops were engaged in contest with skirmishing parties which the king had sent forwards, Martin Du Bellay, by a happy manœuvre ably seconded by the garrison, succeeded in completely revictualling the town, and even in introducing a fresh reinforcement of troops. The object of the king's march being now achieved, Francis resolved to retire without offering battle to the emperor. By night, and under shelter of thick woods, the retreat of the royal army was skilfully accomplished. The Imperialists, disappointed in their hope of compelling Francis to come to an engagement, followed in pursuit for a short distance, but were valiantly driven back by Brissac and the dauphin, with considerable loss. The emperor remained for a few days longer before Landrecy, during which the town suffered vehement assault, as by its capture Charles hoped to efface the disgrace of its relief by the king, in the very presence of his army. As all his attempts were repulsed by the bravery of the besieged, the emperor was compelled, by the ceaseless rains which fell, and the difficulty he found in procuring provision for his army, to withdraw his troops from before Landrecy. He retired into winter quarters at Cambray; and as the advanced season precluded further operations, the two monarchs agreed on a cessation of hostilities until the following spring.*

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* The repudiated consort of Henry king of England, Anne of Cleves, was the sister of this prince.

During these military operations Marguerite continued in close correspondence with her brother. She says to him, in a letter which was received by the king during his march for Landrecy: "Monseigneur, after having conquered the entire duchy of Luxembourg, which is no small achievement, and after taking and fortifying Landrecy and rendering the town impregnable in the short space of thirty days, against the forces of the emperor, you have every reason to content yourself this year, and leave the enemy to himself; for if the emperor presumes to attempt the recovery of what you have conquered,† you will know so well how to defend yourself that his loss will be greater than at first. Therefore, if he acts wisely, and in accordance with the advice of his Spanish council, he will offer you peace; or at least so long a truce that the

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* Mém. de Martin du Bellay. Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

† The duchy of Luxembourg.

Turks may be able to return home in the spring; for the Imperialists feel an incredible dread of these your new allies. Nevertheless, whatever may be your decision, whether it be for peace or for a truce, it cannot fail to redound to your honour; for you are victorious and the conqueror; only let your success now be made profitable to you."*

The queen records in animated verse her transports of joy and thankfulness when the news reached Nérac of the successful expedition made by the king for the relief of Landrecy, and his temporary triumph over the emperor.

"Je ne saurois dire alors que je fis,
Mais d'ung enfer santée en paradis
Je me sentis, et, d'aise surmontée,
Prins mon mary ainsy que deshontée;
Tous deux courant, à l'église soubdain
Feusmes portés; avecques nous tout plein
De monde vint, plus portés de plaisir
Que de leurs pieds; chacun ayant desir
De s'acquitter à mercier celuy
Qui de leur Roy a esté fenue appuy."†

Marguerite then despatched a letter of congratulation to her brother. She embodies in her poetical epistle on the relief of Landrecy, almost all the sentiments expressed in this letter, which the king must have found enthusiastic enough even to satisfy his own appreciation of self.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO FRANCIS I.

"Monseigneur,—You well know and feel the joy with which God has filled my heart on the occasion of your glorious and safe return; the distress which I have endured during these past eight days has been so intense (fearing that a battle must take place at which you would be present), that I cannot express the thousandth part of the relief I now experience after such a season of suspense, seeing that God has restored you to your kingdom, your children, your friends, and your servants. There was not a person here, who knowing that two such forces were about to be opposed, believed that a king and an emperor, each at the head of a hostile army, finding themselves within cannon-shot the one of the other, would retire without hurt. The danger seemed to us so imminent, that when a packet of letters arrived, every one opened his despatch in tears and apprehension.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., Bibl. Roy., MS. No. 80.

† Marguerite De la Marguerite des Princesses." Epitre au Roi, sur l'avitaillement de Landrecy.

God, however, has now dried our tears, and has realized the inward assurance I felt that the emperor would not attack your army. Also you, monseigneur, you now promise me that this year you will hazard no more; but content with having achieved the conquest of the duchy of Luxembourg, you will repose during the winter. Nothing can have been more wisely ordered than this resolve; for the glory cannot be augmented of having, in less than thirty days, fortified a town so as to render it impregnable against the united action of the largest army the emperor and the king of England have ever set on foot, and of compelling the former to raise the siege, after revictualling the city, and introducing fresh succours under his very eyes. You then conferred such gracious commendation on the men who aided in this undertaking, as to make even death for your service welcome to their comrades; and afterwards you withdrew your army in such honourable array, that the number of prisoners captured declares plainly upon which side God fought, and the valour and wisdom with which he has inspired your servants. Even had you hazarded a battle, although the victory must have been yours, yet it could not be achieved without the loss of multitudes of brave soldiers, who will yet gain you many triumphs, if your enemies do not come to the conclusion that peace with you is more profitable to the emperor than war; and that it is more honourable to be received in Paris as your friend and brother, than as your enemy, to succumb before Landrecy, to say nothing of the loss and the shame.

I feel convinced, monseigneur, that when you think upon the many mercies bestowed upon you, you render thanks and honour to Him who confers them; knowing that the more He elevates you by His favour and countenance, the more incumbent is it upon you to laud Him; taking heed that your successes do not engender pride in your heart, but only redoubled love and thankfulness. I entreat God, monseigneur, to keep you in your present prosperity and health, and to bestow upon you a solid peace, in order that leisure may be given to you and yours to praise the Author of such good and to acknowledge His providence in all things, as will during the remainder of her life,

"Your very humble and very obedient subject and *mignonne*,

"MARGUERITE."*

The Turkish flag, meanwhile, rose proudly over the waters of the Mediterranean; and the lilies of the most Christian king and the crescent of Mahomet had united to wage war in Europe. The alliance between Francis and the sultan, so fiercely deprecated, had at length borne its fruit, and the harbour of the valiant Marseillois sheltered the fleets of the Mussulmans. The fierce corsair Barbarossa, whose very name excited almost fabulous terror on the coasts of Italy and Sicily, commanded the Turkish fleet of 112 vessels of war; the French navy in the Mediterranean amounted to about 60 galleys; and the united fleets were placed under the joint command of Barbarossa and the young count d'Anguien, brother of the duke de Vendôme. It was a novel sight for Europe to witness an Infidel fleet anchored in the port of Marseilles, and a prince of the royal line of Valois acting almost as lieutenant of the noted pirate chieftain whose name was never uttered without execration. Barbarossa, nevertheless, was received with extraordinary honours by the citizens of Marseilles; the trade of the Marseillois was benefited by his presence, and gold and jewels poured into the city from his ships as they sailed and returned from piratical cruises along the neighbouring coasts; for the Turkish admiral by no means limited his naval operations to making war on the enemies of king Francis.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., Bibl. Roy., MS. No. 84.

The united fleets at length sailed; and on the 10th of August, 1543, and whilst the armies of the king ravaged Luxembourg, Barbarossa invested the town and citadel of Nice. The town was quickly taken by assault; but the citadel, perched on the summit of an almost perpendicular rock, defied the attack of the fleets. The bombardment became at length terrific; the fiercest passions of the Infidels were roused, and had the fortress succumbed, every individual of the garrison would have been massacred. The duke of Savoy, whose activity neither age nor misfortune had impaired, raised a small body of troops and hastened to support the gallant efforts of the citizens of Nice. The approach of winter, the heavy rains, and tempestuous winds, fought, however, more successfully for the inhabitants of Nice than the succours brought by the duke; and at length Barbarossa found it requisite to raise the blockade and retreat back again to harbour at Marseilles. Here the Turkish fleet remained at anchor during the winter. Before taking leave of the count d'Anguien, who, upon the failure of the expedition, prepared to join the royal army in Luxembourg, the Turkish admiral exacted the sum of 800,000 crowns for himself, while demanding considerable gratuities for his officers. The booty amassed by the Turks by trading with the Marseillois, and by their piratical descents along the shores of the Mediterranean, was immense: it is recorded that Barbarossa employed thirty-two treasurers for three days and three nights in dividing the treasure he had accumulated into bags containing between two and three thousand crowns each. When on shore, the Turkish admiral affected great state, being constantly attended by two pachas robed in cloth of gold.*

The imprecations which the princes of Europe had showered upon the unscrupulous monarch who dared to make compact with the Infidels, appeared accomplished. The action of the combined fleets was impeded; and the disdain manifested by Barbarossa for his Christian allies incensed the French, and led to all manner of disastrous feuds on board the fleets. The rapacity of the Turks, and their violent appropriation of the substance of their allies, constantly recalled the cruel piracies they had committed; and their utter defiance of subordination, except during the combat, created serious apprehensions along the coasts of Provence.

Libels of a most defamatory character, meanwhile, were issued by the ministers of the emperor, against the prince who harboured the brigand fleet in his ports; a system of vituperation resorted to with redoubled vigour when it transpired that Soliman, with a faithful regard of treaties which might have put to shame the equivocations indulged in by the emperor, had made a third invasion of Hungary. The Imperial ambassadors at the courts of Europe were not only instructed to disseminate the most injurious falsehood concerning the actions and motives of the king of France, but were further directed to afford personal confirmation when requested, of their published statements.

The Turkish admiral, early in the following spring, demanded permission of the king to sail from the coasts of France, promising to return again in case of need. The fierce soldiery under Barbarossa's command found their sojourn in the ports of France insupportably irksome, habituated as they were to the adventurous life of the buccaneer. The French cabinet made little demur in granting permission for the Turks to weigh anchor and depart; for the embarrassments occasioned by their presence far exceeded the advantages to be derived from the alliance. The fleet therefore sailed away from Marseilles and Toulon, without having achieved one memorable deed: the ravage it committed on the coasts of Naples and Sicily as it passed, *en route* for Constantinople, is fearful to record; the towns were burned, the churches desecrated, and the people slaughtered, or carried off into a slavery worse than death;* and so enormous was the booty amassed, that Barbarossa was compelled to take his meals standing, so crowded were his ships with merchandize of every description. The Turkish fleet, however, before it arrived in port, was overtaken by a violent tempest, which wrecked a number of the galleys laden with the richest spoil; while the remaining vessels, injured by the storm, were compelled to return home without committing further devastation.

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* Brantôme,—Capitaines Illustres. Vie de Barbarossa.

During these the last months of the year, 1543, Marguerite remained alone in Béarn, inhabiting either her palaces of Nérac or Pau. The king of Navarre was at Fontainebleau with his daughter, where the court awaited in suspense the *accouchement* of the dauphiness Catherine de Medici. The queen now frequently suffered from cold and affections of the chest, which exercised so depressing an influence upon her constitution as to render it impossible for her to travel when thus indisposed. The air of Béarn was very prejudicial to Marguerite's health; at Nérac the heat proved too exhausting for her constitution; while the keen breezes of the more mountainous districts injured her lungs. Marguerite, however, we are told, preferred rather to incur some risk to her life, than to fail in her duty, by abstaining from accompanying her husband into Béarn. She took the greatest interest in the prosperity and welfare of the people of Henry's principality, feeling that a solemn responsibility had devolved upon her, which she must have disregarded by making constant sojourn at the court of France. The religious inclinations of the Béarnnois likewise coincided with her own; this Marguerite always acknowledged to be an additional bond between them. During her residence in

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* From the Lipari Islands alone, Barbarossa carried off more than 7,000 captives.

Béarn, Marguerite was also enabled to watch the progress of the terrible chambers of inquiry, instituted for the suppression of heresy in the south of France, and which exercised their functions with unwonted vigour, since the cardinal de Tournon had become chief of the administration.* The measures taken by these chambers were frequently involved in the deepest mystery; and the most terrible cruelties were perpetrated by the inquisitors, not a rumour of which reached the king's ear, except through his sister. Marguerite's extensive correspondence with the proscribed afforded her means of information while in Béarn which she probably would not have possessed at the court of France, where every precaution was taken to hide from Francis the severity of the persecution. In many of her letters to the king, Marguerite pleads the cause of these unfortunate Lutherans and Calvinists, whom she thought had double right to her protection, as the king of Navarre had recently been appointed lieutenant-governor over the provinces of Languedoc, Provence, and Poitou.

Marguerite at this period was often confined to her bed for weeks together by a succession of severe colds, attended with pains in the chest. She also complains of attacks of rheumatism; once she suffered severely from her left shoulder and side, "which, monseigneur, after dinner and during the night, or when I try to stand, torments me very intolerably." At this time, also, the queen was suffering from inflammation in one of her eyes, which neither outward applications nor medicines seemed to subdue.

After the close of the campaign of 1543, the king desired greatly the society of his sister; and her indisposition affected him much. During these months of their unavoidable separation, the correspondence between Marguerite and her brother, both in verse and prose, was incessant. Time seemed but to increase that union of spirit always so remarkably developed, and which, during the life of the duchess d'Angoulême caused the renown of the "Trinity of France"—Louise, Francis, and Marguerite—to spread to the most distant lands. The decease of friends, and the dissensions, religious and political, reigning around, augmented this affection between the king and his sister; and amidst his numerous griefs, Francis found his purest pleasures consist in communion with Marguerite, the inseparable companion of his youth, and his solace during his painful captivity in Spain.

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* Edicts against the Lutherans, of the most severe and cruel description, subjecting them to capital pains and penalties, were issued by the council during the years 1534, 1540, 1542, and 1548. They were to be punished as "heretics, seditious disturbers of public tranquillity, and conspirators against the state."

At the close of the year 1543, Francis despatched to his secretary, Frotté, who was with the queen of Navarre in Béarn, a crucifix to present as his New Year's gift to his sister, accompanied by an epistle in verse. On the same festal day of the preceding year, Marguerite sent her brother an ivory image of the patriarch Abraham, accompanied by an epistle in verse, and twelve silver stars.* Her brother's present was received by Marguerite with delight: the holy symbol, she declared, afforded her unbounded satisfaction: "besides which, monseigneur, I found in the packet sent me by Frotté, a sacred ballad, so marvellously well written, that, without offence to your other works, I think that this surpasses them all; for your verses are filled with divine unction, with faith, humility, and with such love towards your friends, that not only do they inspire me with strength to perform the long journey to see you, but with such infinite joy, that if the wish to see you were not paramount to all other desires, the reaction of so much good would cause my death after the numerous sorrows of the past years."† Marguerite also addressed a poetical epistle of thanks to her brother, in which, after alluding to his recent victories, she congratulates the king on his prospect of soon becoming a grandfather. This strange custom of interchanging images of the saints with an epistle in verse at the commencement of each new year, was continued by Marguerite and the king until the decease of the latter, with the exception of one year, 1546, when the queen sent her brother a very rich doublet, instead of the little ivory effigy.

Meantime, the event awaited with anxious expectation by the nation, took place at Fontainebleau, January 20, 1544, on which day the dauphiness gave birth to a son, to the unspeakable joy of the king. Catherine de Medici was twenty-five years old when she became a mother. Her health, which for many years after her arrival in France had been very much disordered, was restored by the skill of the celebrated physician, Jean Fernel. The king, it is said, was advised by the duchesse de Valentinois to send for Fernel, and appoint him sole physician to the dauphiness, soon after the project of Catherine's divorce had been negatived by the absolute authority of Francis. Fernel, who was one of the most scientific men of the age, and an honour to his profession, had been living for some time in Paris, "where," says an ancient chronicler,* "he lived unknown in that world of a town; not one soul in which knew that he was a physician, or even that such a being existed." Madame de Valentinois had many reasons for wishing that the dauphiness might bear her husband offspring; and, aware of the skill possessed by Fernel, who had previously practised for many years in the town of Amiens, and whose provincial repute probably reached the ears of the duchess during her long residence in Normandy, she persuaded the king to confide to him the restoration of Catherine's health. When the dauphiness found her hopes likely to be realized, so that the probable birth of an heir to the crown would secure her against any future plots to deprive her of the throne she so ardently desired to ascend, she immediately presented a gift of 10,000 crowns to her physician, who from thenceforth found no reason to complain of the niggard manner in which fortune lavished upon him her favours.

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* MS. Suppl. Fran., No. 2286, Bibl. Roy.

† F. du Suppl. Fr., MS. No. 60, Bibl. Roy. See Appendix No. I. for these epistles interchanged between the king and his sister.

The king immediately despatched a courier to Mont de Marsan, to convey the joyful news to queen Marguerite of the safe *accouchement* of the dauphiness, and the happy birth of a prince. Marguerite was confined to her bed, suffering still from severe cold, when her brother's missive reached her. By this event she beheld her own prophecy, as reported by Villemadon, accomplished; the dauphiness, whose pious patronage of Clément Marôt had so greatly excited her approval, was now the proud mother of a son; and the princess, whom the queen's solicitations contributed to maintain in her high estate when menaced by repudiation, had suddenly risen into a political personage of influence and authority. Marguerite expresses her delight and congratulations in a strain verging almost upon transport; she wrote thus to the king, upon the impulse of the moment, after perusing his letter, and without rising from her bed:—

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* Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France. Vie de François, XVII. dauphin.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO FRANCIS I.*

"In very truth and reason may we exclaim with you, monseigneur: '*David,*† *a Domino factum est istud et est mirabile in oculis nostris; hæc est dies quam fecit Dominus: exaltemus et lætemur in eâ!*' for, monseigneur, this is the proudest day, and the day the most joyful and necessary that you and your kingdom have ever witnessed; it is a day meet to chase from your memory the dark night shed around you by the anxieties of the past year; it is a day so joyful that, in bestowing upon you the title of grandfather, it diminishes your age by fifty years. Your new-born heir prolongs your own possession; his nativity renews your own, and brings to you the perfect accomplishment of your desires. What thing can you wish for more, monseigneur? What more appertaining to this world can you petition God to grant you? Does not this mercy give you fresh assurance of his grace?

"You have, monseigneur, during the whole of this past year, done battle against your visible and invisible enemies; though neither their malice nor their power proved strong enough to injure either your kingdom or your person; for you came off from the conflict a king, victorious; a conqueror, yet unharmed. Now these noble attributes are crowned by this other title which God has conferred upon you, that of grandfather. Think not, monseigneur, however, that we of your blood and lineage rejoice alone, or only in concert with those who bear you a personal love; for the people, the poorest people, who scarcely know their king by sight, have reciprocated your joy, and confess that never have they before experienced a greater. As for myself, monseigneur—though during the past night I have been half dead with a cold, which has succeeded the one I suffered from at Christmas—after hearing this happy news, that you are grandfather to a beautiful young prince; that Monseigneur le dauphin is become a father, and Madame la dauphine a mother, after so many years of hopes and fears; that M. d'Orleans and Madame‡ can call

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[*] F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 88, Bibl. Roy.

[†] The word "David" is not found in the Latin text as quoted by the queen of Navarre. Probably Marguerite intended to preface her quotation by "Monseigneur, as David says," but in her hurry she omitted the intervening words.

[‡] The princess Marguerite, daughter of the king.

themselves uncle and aunt, all which are new titles; and I who, in love, merit to be included amongst this goodly number of personages, am become also a great-aunt; imagining, also, that I see all who love you smile upon you amid their tears while gazing on the tears which I know you shed, with a joy at heart all the while even greater than that which possessed you on the birth of your own firstborn, as his birth was more expected and less hoped for—I see your kingdom reinforced in effect by a hundred thousand men, and enriched with infinite treasure. That illness must indeed be grave, which, on such news, refuses to pass away, or that will prevent me from walking in procession to return thanks, and afterwards to join with the people in their rejoicings. I shall also command M. de Burie to kindle such bonfires on the frontiers that your enemies may be appalled by the light of that flame which will warm and revivify your friends, servants, and subjects.

"Monseigneur, before quitting my bed, where I received your adorable letter, I felt the necessity of writing thus, as I am so transported at this joyful event that my eyes perpetually fill with tears, and I know not what I do or think, except that I am penetrated by the assurance that to those for whom God gave His son Jesus Christ, and who have received Him by faith in their hearts, He leaves nothing to desire; for having bestowed upon us already His richest gift, which is His Only Son, with grace to believe and accept such atonement, He can no longer refuse us any smaller mercy. It only remains for us, therefore, monseigneur, to render Him ceaseless thanksgiving, which I believe you do with so heartfelt a fervour that God shall not at last pronounce you ungrateful for His gifts.

"Monseigneur, as it has so happened that I could not be present at this joyful event, I go now with all your faithful subjects to supplicate Him, the dispenser of every mercy, to grant you a long and happy life, and a peace advantageous as can be desired by

"Your very humble and obedient subject and *mignonne*,

"MARGUERITE."

Soon after Francis was apprised of the safe delivery of the dauphiness, he proceeded to her apartment to congratulate her. "My daughter," said the king, as he affectionately embraced Catherine, "I promise to grant you any request, which you please to prefer." In this her hour of triumph over those enemies who would first have disgraced and then have immured her for life in a convent, Catherine betrayed the dominant passion of her heart, and revealed that ambition which on ordinary occasions she dissembled with an artifice perfectly marvellous in its cunning. "Sire," replied she, "*je ne vous demande autre grâce, sinon, que je ne sois plus de la petite cour.*"* This request, which the king immediately granted, conferred important privileges on the adroit Catherine, of which subsequently she fully availed herself. The dauphin and the younger children of the king did not then dwell with their royal father; for though they generally inhabited the same palaces, yet the "pavilion royal," surmounted by the banner of the lilies, was considered a distinct dwelling, and as sacred from intrusion as if a different roof sheltered the princes. The dauphiness, therefore, obtained permission to hold her royal state with the king and queen Eleanor; she also acquired the privilege of *entrée* at all times to the presence of Francis, without making public demand through her chamberlains for this favour, which was specially granted to others, if requested, during the hours set apart for the king's retirement. Catherine thenceforth devoted all her time to the king, with whom she had always been a great favourite. She seldom again appeared in the circle of *la petite cour;* and her influence daily augmented over Francis, whose caprices and prejudices she carefully studied; and at the close of the reign, perhaps next to the power of the queen of Navarre, that of the young dauphiness rose most in ascendant. *

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* Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

The exultation of the court at Fontainebleau at the nativity of the prince, was much damped, when a few days after his birth the health of the poor infant declined, and continued to droop under most extraordinary symptoms, which afforded subject for hot debate to the royal physicians. The body of the young prince was often suddenly covered with large livid spots, which occasioned such extreme debility that the respiration of the child could not at times be detected. He suffered also from a serious obstruction in the head, that the physicians could never eradicate; and which, as he grew older, caused him to speak through the nose. All kinds of evil prognostics became rife; and it was averred that the astronomical phenomena, and the irregularities of the season observable during the pregnancy of the dauphiness, denoted that her promised offspring would hereafter suffer either personal or political calamity. During the autumn preceding the birth of the prince, great floods desolated the country; and the rain pouring down in ceaseless torrents threatened an universal inundation. For eight days and eight nights the rain descended with little interval during the middle of the month of November, 1543. The town of Avignon was nearly swamped; the Rhone swept away more than 200 yards of the city wall, and its rushing waters submerged the churches appertaining to the monasteries of the Carmelite, the Augustinian, and the Franciscan Orders, so that the sepulchres being forced open by the violence of the flood, the corpses were washed away and carried for miles down the river on the bosom of the boiling torrents. The year 1544 was rendered memorable by the occurrence of four eclipses: one, a total eclipse of the sun, happened January 24, four days after the birth of the prince. There occurred also during the same month a partial eclipse of the moon; the other two eclipses of the same luminary were visible in the months of July and November.*

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* Hilarion de Coste. Mathieu,—Hist du Regne de François II.

The poor sickly little prince was surrounded from the moment of his birth with extraordinary honours. His pompous title was *Monseigneur le Duc, fils premier de Monseigneur le Dauphin.*† As the life of the prince appeared precarious, it was deemed expedient to perform the ceremony of his baptism with all possible dispatch. The ceremonial took place in the chapel of Fontainebleau, with great pomp, on Sunday, February 10, at five o'clock in the evening. Marguerite was still too indisposed to be present at the festivities which were given by Francis on this occasion. The king was sponsor to the infant prince, and bestowed upon him his own name, François. The duke of Orleans was the other godfather; and Madame Marguerite, the king's only surviving daughter, stood godmother to her young nephew. The king of Navarre carried the golden basin in the procession to the chapel royal; and Marguerite's daughter, the princess Jeanne walked immediately after the royal infant—who was borne in the arms of the duke of Orleans—on the left hand of queen Eleanor, the princess Marguerite being at her right. Madame de St. Paul, duchesse d'Estouteville, the duchesses de Nevers, de Montpensier, de Guise, and d'Estampes followed; all these princesses and ladies were attired in robes of cloth of gold richly studded with jewels, "so that," to quote from an ancient record of these festivities, "their brilliant raiment flashed with rays of light amid the obscurity of evening, and converted the gloomy night into most serene and luminous day." * During the four following days the palace of Fontainebleau exhibited a brilliant scene of valour and revelry. Tournaments, historical pageants, balls, mock sieges, and naval combats, concerts, running at the ring, quoits, tennis, and solemn banquets, celebrated the baptism of Catherine's son. The ambassador of the republic of Venice received most royal entertainment at Fontainebleau during these festivities, and transmitted to the senate a glowing record of the magnificence of the French court.

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* Francis II. took for his motto the words, "Inter Eclipses exorior." Mezeray.

† Godefroy.

It was on occasion of this royal christening that the poet Ronsard, the idol of the court of France during the subsequent reign, first distinguished himself, and secured for his verse the patronage of king Francis, and the dauphiness. Ronsard filled then the office of page of the chamber to the duke to Orleans. The poet had just returned from Scotland, whither he journeyed in the train of queen Madelaine, consort to James V.

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* Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France. Godefroy,—Cérém. de France.

CHAPTER XI.

Correspondence between the queen of Navarre and her brother—Meeting of Francis and Marguerite at Alençon—The queen of Navarre is censured for her outward compliance with Rome—She is accused of affording protection to Quintin, the chief of the sect of Libertines—Rejoicings of the people of Alençon at Marguerite's arrival amongst them—Opening of the campaign—Siege of St. Dizier—Landing of Henry VIII.—Peril of the French monarchy—Correspondence of the duchesse d'Estampes with the emperor—Surrender of St. Dizier—Advance of the Imperial army upon Paris—Emotion of the king on hearing the news of the surrender of St. Dizier—His address to queen Marguerite—Project of Marguerite and the dauphin to restore the constable de Montmorency to his command—The king refuses to reinstate the constable—Treachery of Madame d'Estampes—The capture of Chateau-Thierry and Epernay—The emperor crosses the river Marne—Alarm of the Parisians—The king perambulates the streets of the capital—Retreat of the emperor to Soissons—Conferences for the treaty of Crespy—Marguerite quits Paris to visit queen Eleanor—Her correspondence with her brother—Articles of the Peace of Crespy—Treaty finally concluded with the king of England—Marguerite presents her brother with an image of king Solomon—Protest of the dauphin against the Peace of Crespy—Persecution of the Vaudois—Death of the duke of Orleans—Circumstances relating to the decease of this prince—The king's malady increases—Return of queen Marguerite into Béarn—She composes her poem of "La Coche"—Marguerite presents her poem to the duchesse d'Estampes—A renewal of hostilities threatened between the emperor and the king—Death of the count d'Anguien—Queen Marguerite's melancholy presentiments—Sojourn of the queen in the nunnery of Tusson—The king's restless agony—Remarkable dream of queen Marguerite—Her anguish and suspense—The death of the king is imparted to her—Marguerite's deportment—Circumstances of the decease of king Francis—The last moments of the king—His funeral obsequies.

THE king continued to urge his sister, by frequent solicitations, to repair to court as soon as her health permitted. But for the burden of affairs, and the numerous anxieties which at this time weighed heavily on his own declining health, Francis would have repaired to Mont de Marsan to console and comfort his cherished sister, *sa mignonne*, la Marguerite des Marguerites. The queen, who personally felt every chagrin and annoyance experienced by her brother, addressed to him letters from her sick couch, overflowing with love and sympathy. She tells him how she longs to be with him, to share his sorrows, and to partake of the joys which yet were vouchsafed him. "Monseigneur, the most convincing testimony that can be given me, that I am growing in the holy perfection at which I aim, is to feel and know that you love me. Your love is a guerdon, efficacious beyond all other earthly reward to render me truly worthy of the good you heap upon me, unworthy as I am, except in one thing, that I heartily reciprocate the affection which leads you to bestow it," wrote the queen* to her brother, about this period. Doubtless the expression of such fervent affection, the constancy of which Francis had proved throughout a long series of years, soothed the king in moments of disquietude. It must have brought peace to the troubled mind of the king to turn from the deceitful blandishments of his perfidious mistress, the duchess d'Estampes, to dwell on the sincere and long-tried attachment borne him by Marguerite, who showed herself faithful alone, amongst the multitude Francis had favoured to meet with the basest returns. The passive indifference with which Francis suffered the presence of men at his court, of whose treachery he possessed the clearest evidence; and especially his toleration of Madame d'Estampes, when he knew, from positive proofs, that she was perfidious, and that her most plausible words were false, furnishes one of the most melancholy indications of the heart-weariness and isolation of the last years of the king's reign.

About the beginning of April, 1544, queen Marguerite found herself sufficiently convalescent to commence her journey. The king, overpowered with cares, had written to her a most urgent supplication to rejoin him without delay; and to render his prayer the more emphatic he despatched a special envoy, to deliver a message to his sister. Marguerite responded to this appeal by setting out. "Monseigneur," wrote she in reply to this communication from her beloved brother, "if I had one foot in the grave, and my physicians declared my death to be inevitable, your letter must have restored me to life. I have heard from your envoy the message which you have sent me, and the affectionate remembrance you bear me, so that even now I cannot recall his words without shedding abundant tears of joy; still less can I thank you as I would."* As the queen repaired straight to her castle of Alençon, Francis had probably quitted Fontainebleau, and was then in Normandy or Picardy directing the military movements on the frontiers which recommenced with the first dawn of spring. At Alençon, therefore, Francis and Marguerite were reunited after the long separation which had proved so painful to both. The king's despondency of spirit, and the presentiment of future evils so continually haunting his mind, were then no doubt confided to his sister. The meeting must have been sorrowful to themselves, and solemn to the personages who witnessed it. Francis, once the handsome, brilliant cavalier, mighty in martial prowess, and the ardent worshipper of human science and learning; and the bright and intellectual Marguerite d'Angoulême, the glory of the court, and the idol of the learned—met, each smitten by the malady which was soon to consign them to the tomb.

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., Bibl. Roy., MS. No. 5.

These adverse circumstances, however, produced not the same depressing influences on Marguerite, as they did on the more worldly spirit of her brother. According to the words which Marguerite used when writing to the count de Hohenlohe, in 1526, so had been her constant petition to God: she then said, "God, mon cousin, is all my hope and desire. Pray to Him, therefore, to bestow upon me a knowledge of Himself, even great as I aspire, and to give me a firm belief that He is all in all." The perfect knowledge which the queen possessed of the Bible, proved an unfailing support in the time of trial; and though the brilliancy of her worldly position had suffered some abatement, still Marguerite looked for the glorious fulfilment of those promises which had inspired Louis de Berquin and countless other Christian martyrs, almost all personally known to herself, with courage to endure the torment of the stake. In those poems, which queen Marguerite tells us are to be regarded as the mirror reflecting the secret emotions and aspirations of her soul, while calling upon God, she exclaims:—

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* F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 7., Bibl. Roy.

"Mon Père donc, mais quel Père? Eternal,
Invisible, immuable, immortel,
Qui pardonnez par grâce tout forfait,
Je me jette, ainsi qu'un criminel
A vos saintz pieds, O doux Emmanuel,
Ayez mercy de moi, Père parfait!"*

Again, she says:—

"Las, oubliez les fautes de jeunesse
Soit par vouloir, par malice, ou finesse
Fragilité, folie, ou ignorance.
Je viens à vous, prenant la hardiesse
Me confiant du tout en la promesse
De mon salut, par votre grand souffrance
Car de penser que peine, ou penitence
Peust meriter, d'emporter la balance
De mes pechés, ce seroit grand' simplesse."†

The teaching of Briçonnet had never been effaced from the heart of the queen; the errors of the bishop of Meaux, his vacillation, and timid defence of the faith, were remembered by Marguerite with tender compassion. Her own position offered almost a parallel to that of Briçonnet; and the same deep conviction of the purity of the faith founded, not on tradition, but on a Scriptural basis, imbued the minds of both. Marguerite shrank from the open confession of her belief, out of mingled love for her brother and a dread of alienating his affection; the bishop of Meaux withheld his testimony before the fear of a cruel death and public degradation.

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* La Marguerite de la Marguerite des Princesses. Oraison à Jesus Christ, p. 143.

† Ibid, p. 142.

Both Marguerite and the bishop of Meaux, however, found those to palliate their want of fortitude in well-doing by assurances that their outward conformity to the ritual of the established Church would, as in the case of Naaman the Syrian, be pardoned by the Almighty, provided that their hearts fervently renounced the idolatrous practices of the Church of Rome. But it was not until after the affair of the placards, which kindled the furious resentment of the king against the reformed ministers, that Marguerite took pains to hide or even to modify her undoubted alienation from the religion of her forefathers. The express commands of the king compelled her from thenceforth to be more cautious in her outward deportment, and to avoid giving offence to the captious theologians of the universities, whose turbulent zeal cost Francis almost more pains to subdue, than the armies of the emperor. This compliance on the part of the queen of Navarre to the outward forms of the Romish Church, was severely censured by the Protestant writers of the day. Béza is especially severe in his comments on what he terms the queen's "lamentable credulity." "After the affair of the placards," writes this celebrated ecclesiastic,* who received his education at Marguerite's university of Bourges, under Melchior Volmar, "the greatest evil which befell reform was, that the greater part of the nobles began to accommodate themselves to the humour of the king, and by degrees alienated themselves from the diligent study of sacred letters, so that finally they became more notorious in their evil deportment than others who had remained steadfast in the old faith. Even the queen of Navarre began to conduct herself quite otherwise, participating like the others in idolatrous worship; not that in her heart she believed or approved of these superstitions, but Ruffi and others professing his opinions, persuaded her that these outward forms were indifferent things. Finally, she became so deceived by the spirit of error, that she received into her household two miserable heretics, of the sect of the Libertines, named Quintin and Pocques, whose blasphemous errors are stated at large, with ample refutation in the works of John Calvin." By the above extract it may be seen that Marguerite, who had endured such tribulation for the sake of reform and its adherents, was unjustly assailed, even by those who called themselves her friends, in their displeasure that her solicitations had failed to procure them religious toleration, and a recognition by the state. This Quintin, who was a tailor by trade, and the founder of the modern sect of the Libertines, whom the queen was accused by Béza of harbouring, suffered death at the stake in the town of Tournay in 1530, several years before the affair of the placards occurred. If the infliction of capital punishment for the sin of heresy can in any way be justified, Quintin fully merited his doom; for the horrible blasphemies which he promulgated would almost seem to demand that Divine wrath might be visibly manifested on the impious offender.

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* Thé, de Béze,—Hist des Eglises Reformées de France.

The opinion maintained by the followers of Quintin, referred to by Béza, and which he accused Marguerite of having accepted, without any grounds for the assertion, except that afforded by her cautious conduct, was, "that all religions may be indifferently professed together." This was a favourite dogma of the Libertines, who denied the efficacy of any religion, and looked upon the ceremonies of the faith as mere idle forms. Béza, therefore, was not ashamed to identify the name of his generous patroness with that of the arch heretic Quintin, because he fancied that the queen acted on the letter of his maxim, though he knew that she was far from putting upon it the same impious interpretation. Besides, Béza is evidently mistaken in accusing the queen of Navarre of favouring Quintin, who suffered death several years before the period when he states that that heretic enjoyed her protection. With unfailing patience, however, Marguerite bore this and many other calumnies, seeking to avenge herself upon none. Once she wrote to Briçonnet during the most prosperous period of her life, when individuals, as well as circumstances, seemed to bow in homage before the brilliant destiny of the king's sister: "Oh, that this poor dead heart of mine may feel some sparks of that divine charity and love wherein I would fain have it burn to ashes!" So fervent a prayer, often and earnestly repeated, as every line almost of her correspondence affirms, met with its fulfilment and response; for Marguerite's faith in God, and her trust in His overruling providence, was the support and consolation of her life. Béza, in his subsequent works, when the violence of party spirit had become modified, mentions the queen of Navarre with great respect, and remarks only, "that she tarnished a little the glory of her great reputation by the credulity she manifested in matters of faith towards the latter years of her life."

The people of Alençon bore Marguerite great affection, and celebrated her return with all manner of rejoicings. An ingenious poet of the town composed and presented to the queen an ode in verse on behalf of the nightingales of her park at Alençon, assembled to chant a chorus of welcome on her return. The poem commenced thus:—

> "Par ceste epistre, en style rude escripte,
> Princesse illustre, ô Royne Marguerite,
> Puisque plus loing ne t'on peu convoyer,
> Humble salut te veullent envoyer
> Ceulx qui par toy ont dit mainte chanson,
> Les rossignols de ton parc d'Alençon."*

The princess Jane rejoined her mother at Alençon, when queen Eleanor and her court quitted Fontainebleau for St. Germain-en-Laye, in the month of May, 1544. The solace of her daughter's society proved very acceptable to the queen after the departure of her brother; for the king of Navarre remained in the south of France to watch over the tranquillity of the provinces intrusted to his care.

Hostilities, meanwhile, recommenced early in the month of April; and while Francis remained his sister's guest at Alençon, he experienced the grief of learning that the town of Luxembourg, the capital of the duchy, had yielded to the Imperial arms. The emperor traversed Lorraine, and continuing his march along the banks of the river Meuse, captured the towns of Commercy, Ligny, and Brienne; and on the 24th of June, laid siege to the fortress of St. Dizier, one of the strongest places in Champagne. The conduct of the French army was confided to the dauphin, conjointly with the admiral d'Annebaut. The camp, by the direction of Francis, who found himself too much indisposed to take personal command of his army, was formed on the banks of the river Marne, between Châlons and Epernay. The garrison of St. Dizier made a most intrepid defence, under the command of the count de Sancerre, and of La Laude, the valiant defender of Landrecy. It held out for six weeks against the fiercest assaults of the Imperialists; and was several times stormed by the entire army of Charles, commanded by the emperor in person.*

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* Notice sur Marguerite d'Angoulême, par M. Le Roux de Lincy. —L'Heptameron, t. i.

In accordance with the treaty signed in London, which stipulated that king Francis should receive chastisement the most condign and permanent, for his unholy alliance with the Ottoman power, the king of England landed at Calais, about Midsummer Day, 1544, with an army of 30,000 men; and being joined by the count de Bure, with 12,000 Imperial troops, Henry besieged Boulogne, and despatched the duke of Norfolk and a division of his forces to invest Montreuil.

Invaded by armies numbering above 80,000 men, commanded in person by two powerful monarchs, the condition of the French monarchy was perilous in the extreme. Against this overwhelming force Francis could only oppose an army consisting of 22,000 infantry and 7,000 cavalry. The army of Piedmont, under the count d'Enguien, it was true, had recently achieved a great victory over the marquis del Guasto at Cerisolles,† and compelled that general to retreat to Milan, attended in his flight by 400 horse only; yet the present danger to which their homes and liberties were exposed, so daunted the French, that the victory inspired them with little enthusiasm. The salvation of France depended on the adoption and strict maintenance of a defensive warfare. The loss of one pitched battle would have opened the road to Paris to both the hostile armies; so that without encountering an opposing force, they might have encamped in the centre of the capital. The same terrible devastations had been perpetrated in the province of Champagne and in some districts of Burgundy, as proved the safeguard of Provence during the invasion of 1536.

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* Mém. de Du Bellay.

† The battle of Cerisolles was fought, April 14, 1544.

France had therefore everything to gain and to hope by adhering to the same policy that before had served her so well. Already Charles's army, while encamped before St. Dizier, suffered from the privations of hunger; little forage for the horses could be obtained; while the infuriated peasantry, whom threats could not intimidate, committed dreadful slaughter, and so harassed the Imperialists, that no detachments dare quit the camp in search of provision, unless protected by suitable escorts. Disagreements and mutual jealousies, likewise, it was foreseen were certain to arise in time between the emperor and the king of England—two princes whose interests were at variance, and whose passions prompted them to measures diametrically opposed.*

The rapid conquest of the duchy of Luxembourg, and the surrender of that barrier of fortresses raised there to defend the frontiers of France, filled the council with consternation. The cardinal de Tournon, the ostensible head of the French administration, was compelled in this emergency virtually to resign his office to the admiral d'Annebaut, whose military experience rendered him the more competent minister of the two. The plan of the campaign, however, was drawn by the king himself, and enthusiastically adopted by the young dauphin, whose ability and military knowledge, which he had acquired under Montmorency, reflected glory on the disgraced constable in his seclusion of Ecouen.

Faction, that evil genius of France in every age, nevertheless, again interposed to defeat the wise and provident measures adopted, and to crush the dawning renown of the gallant young heir of France. The feuds of Diane de Poitiers and Madame d'Estampes raged with redoubled violence as the close of the reign approached. Personal abuse was suffered now to mingle with political rivalry; and with paltry malice the duchess d'Estampes delighted in inflicting slights on her beautiful and nobler-spirited rival, and in favouring the dissemination of slanderous lampoons, in which the character of Madame de Valentinois, before her *liaison* with the dauphin, was assailed by the vilest calumny. Madame de Valentinois met her rival's malignant insinuations with contempt; she absented herself as much as possible from the presence of the ireful duchess; and altogether assumed that lofty deportment which scorned to retaliate. But Diane's star was in the ascendant; while that of Madame d'Estampes was doomed to be extinguished amid the gloom of the king's funeral obsequies. The coldness of the homage offered by the courtiers clearly indicated to the duchess that her reign was drawing to its close; while the assiduity with which all paid their devoirs to Madame de Valentinois, whose receptions had long been more crowded than her own, convinced her that any effort to discredit the latter would meet with signal defeat. The terrible position in which she was likely to find herself after the king's decease rendered the unhappy duchess almost frantic with apprehension. She had incurred the enmity of the dauphin, who was aware of her treacherous correspondence with the count de Longueval; and the persecution which Diane de Poitiers would authorize against the defamer of her reputation, Madame d'Estampes judged of by a few emphatic words that escaped the lips of the duchess, and which were eagerly reported. By dint of flattery and compliance with the whims of the young duke of Orleans, the favourite child of Francis, Madame d'Estampes had secured his countenance; though it was rather that he regarded her as the chief opponent of the dauphin his brother, that the young prince accorded the duchess his support, than for any friendship he felt for herself. Madame d'Estampes therefore seconded with her influence and even by her tears, the proposals of peace which the emperor offered to the king, the principal article of which bestowed the sceptre of Milan on the duke of Orleans after his marriage with the daughter or the niece of Charles V To promote the establishment, out of the kingdom, of the duke of Orleans, the only one of the royal family well affected towards her, so that after the decease of the king a safe refuge from persecution might be afforded her, became the aim henceforth of the duchess's political combinations; and to effect this object she resorted to the most culpable expedients. The count de Longueval continued to be the agent of her treasonable correspondence with the emperor, whom she informed of every measure debâted before the council, which came to her knowledge. Her first exploit is supposed to have been to send to the cardinal Granvelle a copy of the cipher with its key, used by the duke de Guise in writing his despatches; for the object of Madame d'Estampes was to compel the king to accept the terms of peace which Charles still professed himself willing to accord, provided the king pledged himself to renounce his alliance with Soliman II. and the Protestant princes of Germany. If success crowned the efforts of the dauphin's arms; or if starvation proved a still more remorseless foe to the Imperial troops, the duchess knew, as Charles's cession of the Milanese or the Low Countries was to be qualified by a clause expressly stipulating that these provinces should never be united to the crown of France, that the king, unless coerced by the presence of hostile armies around his capital, would continue perseveringly to refuse such treaty.

The first use to which the chancellor Granvelle applied the important secret so faithlessly betrayed, was to fabricate a letter purporting to be written by the duke de Guise, commanding the brave count de Sancerre, governor of St. Dizier, to capitulate forthwith, as the king could afford the garrison no relief. For upwards of six weeks the town had been straitly besieged; the greatest dearth of every necessary of life prevailed, so that when this letter was read in the council of war hastily summoned by Sancerre, the majority of his officers insisted that the duke's supposed commands should be literally obeyed. The garrison accordingly capitulated, after a defence which enlisted the admiration of France; and the troops, by the articles of capitulation granted by the emperor, were permitted to march out of St. Dizier with military honours, bearing away with them their three best pieces of artillery.*

The king, meanwhile, repaired to Paris to tranquillize the excitement and alarm prevailing there. At this period the sufferings of Francis, both mental and bodily, were intense; and, unable to endure the solitude of his palace of the Louvre, or the hollow condolences of his court, he summoned the queen of Navarre from Alençon. It was Marguerite's province to console her brother in the hours of his deepest depression. When the triumph of human glory and ambition faded, and the most magnificent monarch in Christendom quailed beneath the chastenings of adversity, Francis sought comfort from the religion and the goodness of his sister. While his ungrateful mistress so basely betrayed him, Marguerite became the soul of her brother's councils; her energy infused fresh vigour into his measures; she advised, consoled, and encouraged him. The presence of the queen of Navarre in Paris at this critical season was also highly satisfactory to the dauphin, who constantly manifested the greatest respect and deference for his aunt; he knew that while Marguerite's post was at her brother's right hand, the pernicious influence of Madame d'Estampes would decline, and that no suppression of his despatches to the king could be perpetrated with impunity.

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* Mém de Du Bellay. Sleidan.

The king was confined to his room, suffering from a return of his disease, when the news of the surrender of St. Dizier reached Paris. The Imperial army then crossed the river Meuse, and the emperor encamped on the right bank of the Marne, opposite to the camp of the dauphin. It was evening, and Marguerite was alone with the king when this disastrous despatch reached him. The emotion of Francis was deep; he beheld his hereditary foe, the emperor, in full march upon his capital. The defeat of the dauphin, and the simultaneous advance of the English upon Paris at Charles's summons, as bound by the treaty of London, would inflict a deathblow on the monarchy of the Valois; and while his crown was exposed to such imminent peril, the king, enfeebled by disease, was unable to draw his sword in its defence. The heartbroken exclamation which issued from the lips of Francis as he read, was: "*Ah, mon Dieu! que tu me vends cher mon royaume!*" Then, addressing his sister, who stood beside him, and whose prayers Francis had almost learned to regard as the ægis of his kingdom, he said: "Go, *ma mignonne*, go to the church, and hear complines; and when there, intercede with God in my behalf, that, as it is His holy pleasure to favour the arms of the emperor more than mine, at least He will spare me the anguish of seeing him encamped before the principal town of my kingdom!"* The two armies remained for some days in presence of each other; the dauphin studiously avoiding the combat, which Charles himself was not eager to provoke, as he awaited the reply of Henry VIII. to the summons he sent him to advance upon Paris. Henry, who was yet before Boulogne, excused himself from complying with the emperor's very peremptory demand until he should have reduced that town.

But the great military talents of the hero of the Fabian warfare pursued by the dauphin were wasting in obscurity: the constable de Montmorency, indisputably at this time the most experienced and scientific commander in France, remained at Ecouen, doomed by the fiat of his royal master to inaction. It appears that after the capture of Château Thierry, queen Marguerite and her nephew formed the design of reinstating the fallen constable in his command. The dauphin, therefore, addressed a very forcible but respectful memorial to the king, praying him to restore so valiant a captain to supreme command over the armies of France, and recalling Montmorency's glorious defence of Provence. This petition Marguerite probably supported with all her interest, as two letters are still preserved addressed to the constable by the queen of Navarre after her brother's death, which testify that some kind of reconciliation had taken place between the latter and her old favourite. The aversion, however, of Francis to the constable was too rooted to be easily overcome. Though the king proved utterly inconsistent on several of the most momentous occasions of his life, and especially in affairs of religion, he never showed himself capricious with regard to his favourites. He loaded them with honours and favours as long as his confidence in their integrity remained unshaken; but when once they forfeited his good opinion, they never recovered their influence.

The projected restoration of the constable to his high dignities created consternation in the council. The cardinal de Tournon perceived in it his own deposition from the ministry; the admiral d'Annebaut, his degradation.

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* Brantôme.

from the command of the armies of France. Madame d'Estampes, especially, had most to dread from the return of Montmorency: the immense power possessed by the constable would be augmented if he returned to court, the conqueror of the emperor, the benefactor of his king, and the friend of the queen of Navarre and of the duchesse de Valentinois. The duchess, moreover, had everything to dread from the detection, by the severe Montmorency, of her treasonable correspondence with the emperor. The outcry on all sides, therefore, was so great—the courtiers, privy counsellors, and Madame d'Estampes, all uniting to deprecate the return of Montmorency—that the king returned an angry and decisive negative to the dauphin's request.*

During the progress of these intrigues, the greatest distress began to prevail in the enemy's camp: the season was rainy, and all kinds of maladies became prevalent there. The dearth of provisions was even felt by the emperor himself; while the French army was furnished with plentiful supplies, and all the troops were in health and eager to be led against the enemy. The emperor, whose plan of campaign had been disturbed by the refusal of the king of England to march upon Paris, continued for some time to skirt the banks of the river Marne, vainly seeking a ford over which his army might pass without engaging in combat. The vigilant watch maintained by the dauphin defeated this project. The conduct of the young prince during this perilous campaign merits the highest commendation. He had caused the provisions which could be saved when the whole country was laid waste by command of the council, to be gathered, and stored in vast magazines at Château Thierry and Epernay, thus wisely providing, as he hoped, vast military stores for the support of his army. When the Imperial army penetrated higher up the course of the river, seemingly in full retreat on the town of Soissons, the dauphin, previously authorized by the king, despatched an officer with a detachment to break down the bridge over the Marne at Epernay; to carry off such of the provision as he could, both there and at Château Thierry; and to throw the rest into the river; fearing that these two places would not hold out against an attack, in case the emperor, urged by the famishing condition of his troops, attempted to storm either of them. The duchess d'Estampes, who saw in the emperor's retreat the destruction of her schemes, apprised Charles of the dauphin's intention, through the count de Longueval. She subsequently contrived to have the officer who had been sent to Epernay delayed on the road, so as to afford Charles time to surprise the place. The emperor, who had every reason to confide in the veracity of the duchess d'Estampes, immediately acted upon her advice, surprised both the towns, and made himself master of the supplies.* He next crossed the Marne, and established his camp at Chateâu Thierry. The wildest alarm prevailed in Paris when the news of the emperor's advance reached the citizens. Already the outposts of the enemy extended within a few leagues of the capital; and the Parisians trembled for the security of their rich and flourishing city. Persons of all conditions hurried from the capital to take refuge in Orleans or in Rouen; "so that," says Paradin,† "never since the foundation of the town was there seen such tumult and confusion. You might then have witnessed rich, poor, great and little, persons of all ages and conditions, take flight, dragging after them their children and goods, by water or in waggons. Others were seen hurrying down to the river, carrying in their arms their old and infirm relatives, to place them in safety in boats on the river; and of these there were such multitudes that the water of the Seine could not be seen. The high roads were thronged with men, women, children, with horses, carts, oxen, cows, sheep, and other kinds of cattle, which together created such horrible noise and distraction that it appeared as if a great break-up of the elements was about to occur, and all things resolve again into chaos."

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* Mém de Du Bellay.

While this terrible panic was at its height, the king quitted his sick chamber and rode through the streets of Paris, accompanied by the duke De Guise. At various points, Francis paused in his progress to address the people who flocked around him, assuring them that there was no present cause for apprehension. "I cannot protect you, Parisians, from the effects of your own fears," said Francis; "but I will undertake to defend you against the enemy; for I would rather die to promote your safety than live after having failed to rescue you all."* Ill as he was, the king called out and reviewed all the guilds, and various trade-unions of the capital, whose charters bound the members to aid in the defence of Paris on any emergency. This summons was enthusiastically responded to; and thirty thousand armed men gladdened the hearts of the king and his sister by their prompt and warlike array.

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* Bayle,—Dictionnaire Historique—Art., Anne de Pisseleu. De Coste,—Eloges des Enfans de France.

† Paradin,—Hist. de Nôtre Temps.

The dauphin, meantime, hastily broke up his camp at Jallon, and, even at the hazard of a battle, determined to stop the emperor's progress. He marched to La Ferté, a place some leagues below Château Thierry, where he again encamped his army; and after strengthening the garrison of Meaux, he despatched 400 lances, and a body of 8,000 infantry to the relief of Paris. This force was concentrated at Lagny, a little town only a few leagues from the city; and it formed another barrier against the advance of the Imperial army on the capital. The emperor, seeing himself thus forestalled, retreated to Soissons, as the magazines of grain which he had captured afforded only temporary relief to his vast army; and famine again raged in the camp. He took up his abode there in the abbey of St. Jean des Vignes; when, soon after, the king was prevailed upon by the ceaseless importunities of the duke of Orleans, queen Eleanor, and of Madame d'Estampes, to respond to Charles's overtures for peace, and to send commissioners to Soissons.†

Mortified and repulsed, the emperor, on his arrival at Soissons, took to his bed with a violent fit of gout: his progress had been marked by few successes; his losses were immense; and his mind was filled with anger and distrust against the king of England, who obstinately persisted in remaining before Boulogne, although Charles repeatedly admonished him that the retreat of the Imperial army from the banks of the Marne was inevitable, unless promptly succoured. The most gloomy and desponding melancholy oppressed the mind of the emperor; all around him testified to the gradual decay of the brilliant and vigorous things of his youth. Overpowered by bodily ailments, and so crippled with the gout that he could not grasp a pen, Charles felt that Providence had placed limits to his power. His rival in dominion, Francis I., was also rapidly sinking into the tomb; Henry VIII. of England lived, enduring daily torment from the fatal malady with which he too had long been stricken.

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* Paradin.

† The propositions of peace were made by the emperor through a monk of St. Jean des Vignes, of the House of Guzman, who was related to his confessor, and who communicated the desire expressed by his imperial master for peace, to the confessor of queen Eleanor.

The solemn presentiment which imbued the minds of the three monarchs that their earthly career was drawing to a close inevitably disposed them to peace. Rest, and cessation from warfare seemed now to them greater boons than the acquisition of provinces; the solitudes of St. Lazare of Toledo, or the silent aisles of the cathedral of Grenada, where the beloved wife of his youth reposed, appeared more inviting to the emperor Charles than the grandest of triumphs over his ancient foe. The failing health of the monarchs produced a corresponding declension of vigour in their counsels: in the cases of Francis and Charles, the wishes of the successors of the sovereigns were too much regarded by the ministers of their respective crowns not to infuse a vacillation in their public policy, most baneful to the national prosperity.

The deputies nominated by the king to treat for peace were the admiral d'Annebaut, and the keeper of the privy seal, de Chemans. The emperor deputed the chancellor de Granvelle, and Ferdinand of Gonzaga, generalissimo of the Imperial forces. The duchess d'Estampes had even the art to enlist religion in furtherance of her projects, by the overtures she successfully made to Martin de Guzman, a Dominican monk, and confessor to the emperor, who constantly exhorted his royal penitent to pacific measures.

As soon as negotiations for peace were fairly opened, Marguerite quitted Paris, and repaired to visit queen Eleanor and the princesses, who were probably residing at St. Germain. The deep anxiety which Eleanor felt at this second invasion of her husband's territories by the emperor, brought on a sharp attack of fever; and on Marguerite's arrival she was yet exceedingly ill. Francis, through his sister, sent directions to the queen to write congratulations to the emperor on the peace, and to send her letter by one Corneille, a messenger whom Charles had commissioned to visit Eleanor, and inquire after her health. Marguerite, soon after her arrival, wrote to the king an account of Eleanor's condition; and to assure him that at the cost of great personal suffering his obedient consort had obeyed his wishes. She says: "Monseigneur, you have sent the queen so marvellous a cure for her malady, that neither fever nor any other ailment will long prevent her from rejoining you. I never saw any one more transported with joy than she seemed; in which sentiment she is joined by all who desire your welfare and that of your kingdom; and we unite in beseeching God to grant a prosperous termination to negotiations which have opened so propitiously. Monseigneur, according to your command, the queen has answered the emperor's letter; but she is grieved that her strength does not permit her to descant, as she otherwise would, on the advantages of this most welcome peace. She has commanded me to offer her excuses for not writing to you; but I assure you, monseigneur, that the last time she wrote she found herself so feeble from the exertion, that to-day I entreated her to be satisfied with having despatched her letter to the emperor, which you had demanded in haste. I told the queen, monseigneur, that you cared more for her repose than for the sight of her handwriting; as the one will soon send her back to you convalescent, while the latter would delay her recovery, on account of the dreadful headaches which afflict her, when even to speak while she suffers thus, or to listen to others gives her pain. She requires perfect repose to recover." The queen then sends her brother information of the deportment of Corneille, the emperor's envoy. "Corneille, monseigneur, departed from us very well satisfied with the condescending words you addressed to him. He assured the queen that he has never seen the emperor before so well disposed, not only for peace, but to contract perfect alliance and friendship with you, forgetting the past, so as to regenerate anew the bonds of fraternity existing between you both. The queen commands me, furthermore, to say, she perceives that the emperor is sincere in his desire for peace; as she has never heard him before speak so enthusiastically as she understands he has done from the envoy. Therefore, monseigneur, we have changed the name of the latter; and instead of Corneille,[*] which appellation bears a bad augury, I have told him that he shall be henceforth named Coulombe, because like the dove he has brought us an olive branch of peace."[†]

The emperor, meanwhile, made no scruple of treating for a separate peace with Francis, without including his ally, Henry of England, whose proceedings incensed him greatly. Charles, however, went through the formality of despatching an envoy, the bishop of Arras, to the English camp, to invite that king to send ambassadors to the conference opened at Soissons; though the emperor did this only on discovering that Francis had made the same overtures through the cardinal du Bellay.[‡] The articles of the treaty finally concluded between Francis and the emperor, which were negotiated at Soissons, and concluded at Crespy, September 18, 1544, ceded either the Milanese, or the Low Countries to the duke of Orleans at the expiration of two years, on the marriage of the prince with the emperor's daughter, the infanta Mary; or with his niece, Anne of Austria—the duke promising to accept the hand of whichever of these two ladies the emperor should be pleased to bestow upon him. The Netherlands was to be the dower of Charles's daughter; the duchy of Milan that of his niece. The king engaged to renounce the alliance of Soliman II., and of the Protestant princes of Germany; and promised to assist the emperor to subdue the power of the Turks, and to arrest the progress of heresy. It was likewise agreed to make mutual restoration of all conquests achieved since the signature of the truce of Nice. The king, moreover, promised to bestow upon his second son a yearly revenue of 100,000 livres secured on the duchies of Bourbon, Orleans, Angoulême, and Châtellerault, assigned as appanages for the young prince.[*] In case the united yearly revenues of these duchies amounted not to the stipulated sum, the duchy of Alençon was to be added to the fiefs bestowed upon the duke; though it is nowhere stated what compensation the king in such case afforded his sister for the pecuniary loss which she would sustain. The dominions of the duke of Savoy were to be restored to him, when the duke of Orleans received the investiture of the Milanese; although this duchy, by a clause expressly introduced into the treaty, and assented to by the king, was never to be united to the crown of France. *

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[*] Corneille—a crow.

[†] F. du Suppl. Fran., MS. No. 58, Bibl. Roy.

[‡] Beaucaire,—Commentaires, l. 24.

Boulogne, during the conferences of Crespy, had at length fallen before the determined siege laid to it by king Henry; and this event had great weight in determining Francis to accept the conditions of peace proposed by Granvelle in his master's name. After the signature of the treaty, Charles recalled his troops from the English camp; so that the duke of Norfolk was compelled to raise the siege of Montreuil, and retire from before this important place, which was then regarded as the key of the province of Normandy. Peace was not finally concluded between Francis and Henry VIII. until the year 1546; during this period hostilities were carried on by land and by sea. The French made a descent on the Isle of Wight, and burned several farms and villages; they then landed on the coast of Sussex, at Rye; but at length the fleet retired back again to Havre de Grace, without having effected any operation of importance. † The plenipotentiaries of the two monarchs met at Campes, a place between the towns of Ardres and Guines; and the treaty was agreed upon and signed with the utmost expedition. ‡ It consisted merely of two articles; for between Henry VIII. and Francis I. no complicated territorial question existed to perplex the commissioners. It was agreed that Francis should pay Henry, by a certain day, the sum of two millions of golden crowns, in lieu of the arrears of his pension, the debts owing to him by the king, and the sums he had expended during the siege of Boulogne. Until this sum had been paid, it was settled that Henry should retain possession of the town of Boulogne as security, when that place was to be restored to the French crown.

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* Du Bellay. Sleidan. Paradin.

† Du Bellay. Hume.

‡ During the month of June, 1546.

As soon as the peace of Crespy was definitively accepted by the emperor, Francis quitted Paris for Romorentin, hoping to benefit his health by change of air, and to afford some alleviation to the melancholy which oppressed him, by hunting in the noble forests then surrounding the ancient castle of the counts d'Angoulême. Queen Eleanor and a part of her court accompanied the king, while Marguerite either remained at St. Germain-en-Laye, or, as is more probable, returned to Alençon.

At the commencement of the year 1545, the queen sent her brother, as a New Year's gift, an ivory figure of king Solomon. In the poetical epistle which accompanied the image, Marguerite explains the emblematic meaning she attached to this gift, as also to the presents she made her brother on two preceding years, of the figures of king David and of the patriarch Abraham.* She also congratulated him on the peace which had just been concluded between "*le lys et la pomme ronde.*" The anxieties of the king seemed always on the increase, and none could console him better than Marguerite. The treaty of Crespy was received with deep displeasure by the dauphin and his party, including the constable de Montmorency. The retreat of the emperor to Soissons before his arms, appeared to the young prince as the commencement of a series of triumphs of which he had been despoiled by the intrigues of Madame d'Estampes, and the culpable partiality evinced by Francis for his second son, whose interests alone had been consulted in the treaty concluded. In great anger, therefore, Henry retired with his consort to Fontainebleau; where, in the presence of his cousin, the count d'Anguien, and of the count d'Aumale, eldest son of the duke de Guise, he went through the ceremony of protesting against the treaty by a formal act, which was signed by these two princes as witnesses.† The exasperation of the dauphin revealed itself, moreover, in the threats which he uttered betraying his intention, on his accession to the crown, to visit with condign chastisement the parties who had had any hand in inducing the king to assent to concessions so dishonouring to the nation. Yet the anger of the dauphin, except as it regarded Madame d'Estampes and the count de Longueval, was unjust: after the capture of Château Thierry and Epernay, the kingdom was exposed to perils the most imminent; and the occupation of Paris by the combined armies of England and the Empire, was frustrated only by the wayward caprice of Henry VIII., who refused to act to the letter of the treaty he had signed.

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* See Appendix No. II.

† Ribier,—Lettres et Mémoires d'Etât. Mezeray.

Scarcely had the treaty of Crespy delivered the monarchy from the invading armies of the emperor Charles, when another cruel persecution of unhappy converts from the faith of Rome occurred, prompted by the bigotry of the cardinal de Tournon. In the secluded valleys of the Alpine range, which separate the province of Dauphiny from Piedmont, dwelt the remnant of the disciples of Pierre Valdo, the Lyonnese merchant, who were known in France by the name of Vaudois, Pauvres de Lyons, or Insabbatés, from their custom of wearing sandals on their feet, in imitation of their leader. These poor people professed and practised some of the purest Scriptural truths; their manners were simple and grave; and their poverty long shielded them from oppression. Some trifling disputes with the papal legates on matters of ritual, unfortunately directed public attention to the Vaudois in the earlier part of the reign of Louis XII. The king was exhorted to punish their nonconformity by rigorous edicts; but Louis, whose compassionate spirit ever induced him to exhaust every merciful expedient before resorting to measures of severity, nominated a commission* to make inquiry first of all into the lives and doctrines of the Vaudois. When the commissioners presented their report, the good king was so amazed at the primitive simplicity of the habits of these poor mountaineers, and by their Christian doctrine, that he exclaimed: "*Ils sont meilleurs Chrétiens que nous!*" During the remainder of the reign of Louis, therefore, and the earlier part of that of his successor, the Vaudois lived unmolested in their mountain fastnesses; and greatly increased in numbers.

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* Laurent Bureau, bishop of Sisteron, confessor to king Louis, was appointed chief of the commission; a prelate of great learning and enlightenment.

Tidings of the great evangelical movement agitating Europe at length penetrated to the hamlets of the Vaudois; the writings of the reformed ministers were received with transport; and they hastened to claim brotherhood with men whose doctrines on all material points were those preached by their own apostle Valdo. The Vaudois opened a correspondence, about the year 1530, with Bucer, and Œcolampadius; in 1536 they consulted Farel, and accepted on all points the doctrine and discipline of the Church at Geneva.* At that time the Vaudois numbered about 10,000 households, all established amid the beautiful mountain scenery of the Alps.

The increasing number of the Vaudois at length attracted the attention of the parliament of Provence; under the ministry of the cardinal Duprat, and the scrutunizing zeal of the Faculty of Theology of Paris, these poor people had no chance of escaping from the persecution raging with unrelenting violence around them in the provinces of Languedoc and Provence. Some act of offence perpetrated by one of the Vaudois leaders against a priest, served as a pretext for the persecution; and accordingly, in the month of November, 1540, the parliament of Provence, under the presidency of the famous jurisconsult Chassanée, rendered a decree of such cruel rigour as would alone have sufficed to confer unenviable fame on the magistrate whose hand had signed it. The decree delivered over the head of every household of Vaudois in the towns of Mérindol and Cabriéres to the secular arm; all the property of the inhabitants was confiscated; every house was to be razed to its foundation; and every tree growing in the gardens, orchards, or woods appertaining to those towns, was to be uprooted and burned as accursed.† The remonstrances of the enlightened Guillaume du Bellay, and the strong representation which he made of his own eminent services on behalf of the Vaudois, which he averred entitled him to consideration at the hands of the privy council, obtained, after much solicitation on his part, the suspension of this iniquitous decree, though unhappily not its repeal.

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I,

† De Thou,—Hist. de Son Temps.

On the death of Chassanée, the baron d'Oppede succeeded to his offices of president of the parliament of Aix and lieutenant-governor of Provence. D'Oppede was a furious bigot in religion; a rigid disciplinarian, and one whose mind was bounded by the narrow prejudices of party spirit and local feuds. Scarcely had the Imperial army crossed the frontiers of France, and the kingdom began to revive from the calamities inflicted both by its invaders and defenders, than the baron communicated to the privy council the detail of a conspiracy of the Vaudois, which he pretended to have discovered, to seize Marseilles. The accusation in itself was so absurd, that it is astonishing the council did not remove d'Oppede from his responsible post, as a person of too credulous a mind to discharge its varied functions. That the poor and rude peasants of the Alpine solitudes, ignorant of the art of war, and whose days were spent in tending their flocks, should be supposed capable of organizing a plan to surprise the most opulent and warlike town in France, which had twice repulsed from its walls the greatest captains of the age, augured a degree of simplicity into which it is not probable that the French council was betrayed. Nevertheless, it suited the bigotry of the cardinal de Tournon to affect implicit belief in the statement sent by the baron: the extermination of heresy in France he believed to be his peculiar mission; he therefore aggravated the disaffection displayed by the Vaudois to the king; he exaggerated their numbers, and represented to Francis that by tolerating such a colony of heretics, he was preparing for France the same calamities and divisions which desolated Germany, and that there had proved superior to the strong armies and the fortune of the emperor.

The torture Francis suffered from his malady rendered him morose and irritable: betrayed by those whom he had most trusted, a suspicion terrible for those around him, and agonizing for himself, took possession of the king's mind. The very anticipation of a popular rising of the Protestant population of France appalled the mind of Francis; his youth and manhood had been passed amidst wars and the strife of debate; now, rest and repose, so that he might sink into the tomb in peace, seemed a boon of inestimable price to the troubled mind of the king. Supported by the influence of the Roman hierarchy, and during the absence of the queen of Navarre, the cardinal de Tournon well knew how to mould the impetuous passions of the king. His subtle casuistry at length obtained the promulgation of that iniquitous edict—the darkest stain on the eventful annals of the reign of Francis. An order from the council, signed by the king, was despatched to the baron d'Oppede, authorizing the literal execution of the cruel decree given by the president Chassanée; though Francis with culpable negligence forbore, as his subsequent conduct proved, to make himself acquainted with this judgment in detail.* The baron de la Garde was associated with d'Oppede in this commission, and forthwith departed for Marseilles; from whence he was afterwards to sail with the royal galleys to join the fleet assembled in the channel under the admiral D'Annebaut for the projected invasion of England.

The frightful massacre of the Vaudois commenced with the destruction by fire of the towns of Cabriéres and Mérindol. Every human being was remorselessly slain, without distinction of sex, age, or quality. More than three thousand persons were thus hunted down by the ferocious troops, and perished by incredible torments; and but a small remnant only of the Vaudois escaped over the frontiers into Switzerland. Twenty-two villages and hamlets were consumed by flames, every one of the inhabitants perishing by the sword.†

During the progress of this horrible massacre, Marguerite was residing in the north of France. Probably had she been with her brother, this disgrace on the reign of Francis had never occurred. Amid her correspondence no letter of intercession has yet been discovered in behalf of these poor people who shared her faith; though there can be little doubt that Marguerite, whose compassionate heart was ever so greatly moved at the detail of human suffering,‡ would offer intercession for the mitigation of woes so unsurpassed. In several of her letters written at this season, Marguerite speaks to her brother in praise of different personages whom she sends expressly to intercede with him in her behalf for various individuals who had been arrested for heresy, and subjected to cruel torture on the rack to compel their recantation. Marguerite especially mentions the case of a poor pregnant woman, whose sufferings from the infliction of torture kindled her horror and indignation; and she urges her brother to take prompt measures for instituting a rigorous inquiry into the circumstances of the case.

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* De Thou,—Hist. de Son Temps. † Ibid.

‡ The baron d'Oppede was afterwards summonedby Francis to render account of his proceedings. It required all the influence possessed by the cardinal de Tournon to save the baron from capital punishment, as the king declared that his commands had been cruelly exceeded.

A fresh domestic calamity, meanwhile, befell the king before the fires that consumed the dwellings of the Vaudois were extinct, and which popular opinion ascribed to the just vengeance of God, for the enormity of the act perpetrated by the government. This misfortune was the death of the duke of Orleans, the favourite surviving child of Francis. The king had determined to make a personal effort to recover Boulogne from the English, before concluding his treaty with Henry VIII., which after the recapture of this important seaport, could be negotiated on more advantageous terms. The duke of Orleans joined his father at Forêt-Moutier, a small place close to Abbeville. A malignant fever had been raging in the village and the neighbourhood, and even two persons, it was afterwards discovered, had died in the house in which the king and his son sojourned. Dissatisfied with the lodgings assigned for his use, the duke of Orleans insisted on removing into more commodious apartments adjoining, but which were precisely those, as the host hastened to confess, where the parties deceased had died of the plague. When earnestly remonstrated with upon this act of folly, the duke impetuously replied: "*Bon, bon! jamais fils de France n'est mort de la peste!*"* To show his disregard of the admonition, the duke, it is stated, rushed into the infected rooms, followed by a party of riotous young nobles, where, after tossing about some linen appertaining to the parties deceased, they ripped the bed open, and amused themselves by showering the feathers upon each other. At night the duke retired to rest in this apartment: in about two hours, however, he awoke suffering from headache, violent thirst, and every other symptom of the fatal endemic. "*Je suis malade: c'est la peste, et j'en mourrai!*" exclaimed the duke vehemently to his attendants. He then requested that a glass of water might be given him. The duke lingered for two or three days in a most pitiable condition, suffering from great pain and delirium. About an hour before his death he earnestly requested to see the king. This desire was conveyed to Francis, who since the commencement of his son's illness had also been confined to his chamber. On receiving this, the last message of his best beloved child, the king rose from his couch, and declared his resolution of visiting his son. In vain the cardinal de Tournon remonstrated, and pointed out to the king the danger of contagion—Francis remained firm in his resolve, and entered the duke's chamber alone. The dying prince, when he beheld the king, caused himself to be supported by his attendants, and stretching out his arms towards his father, exclaimed: "Ah, monseigneur, I am dying; but now that I have had the felicity of seeing you once more, I die content!" Exhausted with this exertion, the duke fell back on his pillow speechless, and breathed his last in a few minutes.* The excitement of this scene proved too much for the debilitated frame of the king, who was carried back to his apartment fainting from excess of emotion.

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* Gailliard,—Hist. de François I.

The joys of the king's life thus gradually ebbed away; and for the remaining brief period of his existence, Marguerite's affection was the sunshine which alone dispersed somewhat of its gloom and isolation. Francis never recovered the shock of his son's death. A perpetual fever consumed his life, and imparted a restlessness that prompted him to make frequent and rapid changes of abode, which contributed to increase his malady. The queen of Navarre had retired again into Béarn; for, as Marguerite's health failed, she withdrew as much as possible from the court, where all things seemed in a state of transition, and where it was painful for her no longer to witness that devotion to her brother which all exhibited during the palmy days of the reign of Francis I. Her literary tastes served to sooth the dejection felt by the queen of Navarre. Probably the composition of her curious poem, entitled "La Coche," employed the queen's leisure hours at this period, besides a multitude of sacred poems and epistles in verse, which she constantly sent to her brother.

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* September 8, 1545.

The argument of the queen's poem of "La Coche" is most singular. Marguerite imagines that she had quitted her coach to walk alone in a verdant meadow in meditative mood, when she suddenly met three ladies wandering like herself; but apparently overpowered with grief. After a time the disconsolate ladies explain the cause of their sorrow to the queen; when it appeared that the first afflicted fair had abandoned her lover, being highly discontented at his proceedings; the second had been deserted by her lover; while the third lady quitted her betrothed to follow her friends, though she had every reason to be satisfied with his faithful attachment. The ladies, therefore, were weeping together over their misfortunes, and debating amongst themselves which of the three merited the greatest commiseration. Meantime, a heavy shower of rain fell, which compelled the ladies to accept Marguerite's invitation to pursue their argument in her coach. They accordingly take refuge there with the queen, when, after much debate, it is determined to refer the question to arbitration. One of the ladies proposes the king as arbiter. Marguerite takes this opportunity to introduce the most pompous eulogium on her brother, to whom she attributes every possible virtue and quality. She then adds a description of the king's personal appearance, which is as follows:—

"De sa beauté, il est blanc et vermeil,
Les cheveux bruns, de grande et belle taille;
En terre il est comme au ciel le soleil;
Hardy, vaillant, sage et preux en bataille,
Fort et puissant, qui ne peut avoir peur
Que prince nul, tant soit puissant, l'assaille.
Il est benin, doux, humble en sa grandeur;
Fort et puissant, et plein de patience
Soit en prison en tristesse et malheur."*

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* Poëme, "La Coche,"—Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses.

The second lady proposed that Marguerite should herself decide the knotty point. The queen, however, excuses herself from giving a verdict on a question relating to love; for, says she —

> "Mes cinquante ans, ma vertu affoiblie,
> Le temps passé, commandent que j'oublie
> Pour mieux penser à la prochaine mort,
> Sans plus avoir mémoire ni remord
> Si en amour a douleur ou plaisir."*

Marguerite, however, comforts the sorrowful ladies by her assurance that she will record their affliction in verse. The dispute, by mutual agreement, is at length referred to a certain duchess, whom Marguerite calls *sa cousine*:—

> "Et ceste-là se tiendra bien heureuse,
> Que vous direz des trois plus doloreuse."

The queen caused this manuscript of "La Coche," when complete, to be magnificently illuminated with vignettes, and bound in blue velvet, in order to present it to the duchesse d'Estampes. The last vignette of this manuscript, which is preserved in the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, represents Marguerite offering her book to the duchess, "both ladies standing together in a chamber marvellously well adorned and tapestried," as the few lines appended beneath the miniature explain to the reader.† Marguerite probably honoured her brother's unworthy favourite with this gracious gift when she visited the court of France early in January of the year 1546. The queen passed the Christmas at Mont de Marsan, for the benefit of her health, and from thence she despatched her accustomed New Year's gift to her brother, which this year consisted of a rich doublet, instead of the little ivory figure as before.

Francis was at Plessis-les-Tours when Marguerite rejoined him. It was their first meeting since the decease of the duke of Orleans. The king's health had slightly improved, so that all things wore a more joyous aspect; for even his physicians acknowledged that they had now good hope of saving the life of their royal patient. 'If

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* Les Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses.

† Appendix III. de l'Heptaméron, edited by M. le Roux de Lincy.

Francis and Marguerite could have foreseen that after this meeting their earthly companionship was to cease; and that the loving confidence, which not all the trials and reverses of life had shaken, was soon to be severed by the hand of death, how solemn must then have been these their last communings together!

The life of Francis, however, was destined to pass away oppressed with the same weighty care which clouded the brightest years of his manhood. The death of the duke of Orleans reopened the political questions decided by the treaty of Crespy. The cession of the Milanese—that territory the possession of which, had the duchy been worth thrice its actual value, could never have compensated the French for the torrents of blood, and the vast treasures lavished for its acquisition,—became again the *cri de guerre* of Europe. The emperor, in reply to the ambassadors despatched by Francis to inquire what interpretation he now proposed to put on the treaty of Crespy, stated, that the contingency which had arisen could not have been foreseen; but he considered that the decease of the duke of Orleans released him from all engagements he had bound himself by that convention to fulfil.* Charles added further, that he had no desire to recommence the war, unless forced to do so by the aggression of the French king.

Francis, dissembling his profound resentment, applied himself to perfect measures for opening a campaign upon a still more extensive scale. During the whole of this year, dating from the time when the king bid farewell to his sister at Plessis-les-Tours, Francis with restless disquietude wandered through his dominions. Instead of that brilliant court of nobles and ladies which formerly traversed the kingdom when the king made one of his grand progresses, Francis was now accompanied by a train of engineers, and by a few chosen veteran officers, who had grown old in the service of the state, and whose advice he listened to with earnest deference. The king traversed thus the frontiers of Burgundy, Champagne, Picardy, and Dauphiny; inspecting every military work, and in many cases delivering with his own hands the money required for its completion into the hands of the officer in command. The king thus established a complete line of fortresses along his frontiers, in all of which he placed garrisons and efficient supplies. Severe, taciturn, and reserved, the king re-established order in all departments of the state; no favourite was suffered to dictate, or reverse by cabal the decisions adopted by the council of state, over which Francis daily presided.

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* Mém. de Du Bellay.

The discord however, which when it affected no political interest was so entirely disregarded by the king, continued to agitate the court of France, with unmitigated fury. The faction of the duchesse de Valentinois, however, had now acquired supremacy; for the declining influence of Madame d'Estampes over the king was observed and commented upon by all. The valiant young cavaliers of the court, the heroes and statesmen of the future reign, gathered round the dauphin, and adopted his political opinions. Catherine de Medici, the proud mother of Monseigneur le duc, heir of the dauphin, often mediated between the king and her husband, with a dexterity which few then appreciated; the young dauphiness, while preserving the favour of Francis, of the dauphin, and even of Diane de Poitiers, contrived to become the head of a political party, which during the ensuing reign proved strong enough to balance the power of the duchesse de Valentinois.

These *tracasseries*, embittering the latter years of the reign of Francis, were momentarily suspended during the autumn of this year, by the accidental death of the count d'Anguien, the hero of Cerisolles, and the hope of France. The count was at La Roche Guyon with the dauphin, the count d'Aumale, and other nobles. Henry's suite divided one day into two bands to form the siege of an uninhabited house, according to the martial amusements of the day. The count d'Anguien undertook to command the besieged; while the dauphin led the assault. The attack proceeded with great vigour and hilarity, the combatants fighting with snowballs. At last the count d'Anguien, finding himself hard pressed, made a sortie; when some person from within hurled from a window a heavy wooden coffer filled with linen, which falling on the count's head, fractured his skull. The circumstances under which the prince met his death were considered so suspicious by the king, who was aware of the jealousy created by d'Anguien's military triumphs, that he refused to permit the accident to be investigated; fearing, it was conjectured, that the dauphin, or the count d'Aumale, might be implicated in the crime, if such it proved.*

Amid these numerous chagrins, the year 1546 expired. Marguerite still inhabited Béarn, and devoted herself to religious meditation and study. Probably, the wandering life led by the king prevented her from rejoining him. A presentiment of impending evil agitated the mind of the queen; she was frequently observed wrapped in deep meditation, and often her ladies surprised her in tears. She sought solitude, and her religious duties alone seemed to give her consolation or satisfaction. Her health continued very feeble and uncertain; and it was remarked by those around that it varied according to the alteration in the king's condition. Marguerite warned her friends that the stroke which deprived herself or her brother of existence, would soon tell with fatal certainty on the survivor; so persuaded was she of the mysterious and spiritual union subsisting between Francis and herself.

The winter of 1546 set in with unusual severity, so that Marguerite was seldom able to go abroad, or even to quit the apartments she occupied in the castle of Pau. Often the snows retarded the arrival of the couriers constantly passing between the king and his sister. The most intense suspense then possessed Marguerite's mind: and the anguish she endured, and her sleepless nights, seriously injured her constitution, and confirmed the malady beneath which she suffered. In God alone centred her hopes: such had been the words used by Marguerite in the day of her most brilliant prosperity; and she herself, in her own touching verse, has assured us that He abandoned her not in the hour of adversity to the bitterness of despair.

Early at the commencement of the year 1547, after the frosts had broken up, and the roads were open to travellers, Marguerite quitted Pau; and in order to enjoy greater retirement, she took up her abode in a convent at

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* Mezeray.

Tusson,* a little village of Angoumois, proposing to pass Lent with the nuns before she repaired to court. Tidings of her brother of more favourable import had reached the queen; his astonishing activity, and the rapid changes of abode effected by the king, filled his courtiers with astonishment. The royal forests rang, as in olden time, with the echoes of the chase; the severity of the weather was disregarded by the king, though the earth often shone with a thick incrustation of ice. On horseback during several hours in the day, Francis, though agonized by the wound destroying him, followed in pursuit of the boar, striving to forget his pain in the excitement of the hour. At night the most terrible prostration of strength ensued; consumed with fever and a thirst which nothing could allay—the groans and plaints of the unhappy king filled every heart with compassion. By sunrise Francis took to his horse, though in vain remonstrated with by his physicians, who considered this violent exercise as likely to augment his disorder; and followed by a few chosen courtiers, he again set out on his roving expeditions. During the months of February and a part of March, the king thus visited Saint Germain, La Muette, Villepreux, Dampierre, Limours, Loches; Fontainebleau, and a variety of other palaces.† Nothing satisfied the king; no place bestowed upon him rest. The thought of Marguerite alone gave him momentary solace: sometimes the king despatched a courier to summon her in all possible haste; then the order was as suddenly revoked; for Françis, with the wayward caprice of illness, thought himself irresistibly impelled to take an opposite route to the place at which he had prayed his sister to meet him.

More blessed was Marguerite in her declining health. The wild restlessness of her brother's mind, which betrayed a conscience ill at ease, tormented her not; and kneeling before the altar of the God whom she had feared and reverenced in her youth, she was able to submit with resignation and trust to His dispensations. Marguerite's days at this period seem to have been spent in meditation, prayer, and in the study of the Bible. She maintained a constant correspondence with her brother, and, doubtless, also with the king of Navarre: the queen likewise composed various sonnets and sacred pieces in verse.

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* This convent at Tusson existed until the Great Revolution.

† Mém. de Du Bellay.

Marguerite had been for several weeks an inmate of the convent at Tusson, when one night, about the commencement of April, 1547, she dreamed that her brother appeared by her bedside, looking pale and ghastly; and that in a voice of sorrowful anguish, he exclaimed: "Ma sœur! ma sœur!"* The queen awoke, and gazed eagerly round; but the vision had disappeared: nevertheless, the impression left on Marguerite's mind was profound, and she rose, and forthwith despatched messengers to Rochefort, the place where she supposed that the king was sojourning, to make inquiries after his health. During the few following days, Marguerite withdrew entirely from the society of the nuns, and seldom quitted her room. Her suspense was intolerable; but days elapsed, and still no news of the king arrived to gladden her.

Queen Marguerite's messenger had been gone a week when she dreamed again that the phantom appeared by her bed, uttering the same mournful and earnest summons. The agitation of the queen's mind then became intolerable; she summoned her attendants, and strictly questioned them; but to calm her sorrow they informed her that the last reports received of the king's health were favourable. A suspicion, nevertheless, still lingered in Marguerite's mind that she was deceived; and to soothe her troubled spirit, after despatching another courier to the court, the queen repaired to the convent chapel to pray in solitude. As she passed through the cloisters, Marguerite met her private secretary, Thomas Coustelier, to whom she spoke, in order to give him directions to write to some personage of the court, whom she thought would send her minute intelligence respecting the king. While Marguerite was yet speaking with her secretary, she heard the sound of some one weeping very bitterly in a distant part of the cloister. Followed by her secretary and a few attendants, the queen, before entering the chapel, proceeded to ascertain who the mourner was, to relieve her grief. The sobs were found to proceed from a poor nun of weak intellect, who was suffered to wander about the convent at pleasure, as her temper was gentle, and she harmed nobody. Marguerite approached the weeper, and gently said: "What misfortune do you deplore, sister?" The nun, who had been previously instructed what reply to make in case her grief attracted the queen's compassionate attention, replied: "Alas! madame, I weep not for myself; it is your great calamity which I bewail!" then hiding her face in the folds of her veil, she fled from the spot. Marguerite became very pale; and for long she seemed overwhelmed and incapable of uttering a word. With a deep sigh she presently said to her attendants: "You have concealed the death of the king: but God, you perceive, by the instrumentality of this poor maniac, has revealed it to me."* The queen then retired to her chamber, and kneeling on the floor, she humbly besought of God fortitude and consolation: she next uttered a fervent thanksgiving for the mercies which He had showered upon her in the midst of her tribulation. Afterwards she entreated to be left quite alone.

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* Sainte Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre de l'Incomparable Marguerite.

The prophecy unwittingly uttered years before at St. Germain by Marguerite, and for which her brother had tenderly reproached her, was fulfilled. "Monseigneur," Marguerite had written in her letter of explanation to her brother, "I entreat you to do me the justice to believe, that if I said I thought I should be the longest survivor, it was only when inspired by the dread that God had doomed me to suffer the very perfection of misfortunes and trials which He could inflict on one of his creatures!" In her grief there seemed to Marguerite no shelter or sympathy left for her in the world: all around was dark and hopeless; and her spirit grew dismayed at its solitude. Gradually had the bond been dissolved which united the three whose union had given them happiness perfect as earth could afford: the last of "the Trinity of France," Marguerite, lingered behind, to fulfil perhaps the design of an all-wise Providence, who decreed that her pure and loving heart, deprived of its dearest earthly support, should centre its hopes and joys on Heaven alone.

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* Ste. Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre.

Francis had been dead nearly a fortnight before the intelligence was imparted to the queen of Navarre. This precaution was adopted by command of the new king, Henry, who bore Marguerite the greatest affection and respect—a feeling shared also by Catherine de Medici. Francis had designed to spend the carnival at Loches, or Tours; and, accompanied by the dauphin and a brilliant court, he arrived, about the end of March, 1547, at the former place. Hours of excruciating sufferings ensued; and during the silent watches of the night the king wandered from chamber to chamber throughout that ancient fortress, unable to find repose, either bodily or mental. The following morning Francis made known his resolve to depart for St. Germain-en-Laye, that there, in the vicinity of the capital, he might profit by the skill of his most eminent physicians; and especially by that of the famous Ambroise Paré, whose renown for the wonderful cure he had performed on the count d'Aumale,* inspired the king with hope that the talent of Paré might be effectual in his own case likewise.

From Loches, the king proceeded to Rambouillet, intending only to sojourn there a night; but unfortunately a temporary alleviation from pain induced Francis to prolong his abode. On the following morning he commanded a grand boar-hunt in the pathless forests which then enveloped that royal residence. The almost supernatural energy displayed by the king in this fatal hunt was remarked by many of the courtiers, who had witnessed the alarming prostration of strength from which Francis suffered while at Loches. It was as the final wrestle of that once vigorous and manly frame with death, ere the spirit departed which gave it life and animation. The king retired immediately on his return from this expedition: his strength, however, suddenly failed, and the agonies which he habitually endured increased in violence, to cease again as abruptly after the lapse of some hours. This cessation of pain, however, was but the prelude of speedy dissolution. The physicians soon discovered that mortification of the wounds had commenced; and they unanimously admonished the king that his hours were numbered. Francis listened to the fiat with outward resignation; then sending for the dauphin, he addressed to him an emphatic admonition on the conduct it was expedient for him to pursue after his accession to the crown. He exhorted his son never to recall Montmorency, or to suffer him to hold office in the state: this admonition the king repeated several times. He counselled the dauphin, likewise, to check the ambition of the princes of the House of Guise; and to control the aspiring genius of the prelates of that family. He recommended his son to diminish, as much as possible, the taxes which the necessities of war had compelled him to impose. The king then uttered an honourable eulogium on the upright administration of his ministers, the cardinal De Tournon and the marshal d'Annebaut, both of whom he advised the dauphin to retain.* No mention is made of the queen of Navarre in the records we possess of the dying hours of Francis; a similar silence is observed respecting the princess Marguerite, the king's only daughter, and the duchesse d'Estampes. It cannot be supposed, however, that in the long private conference which it is recorded Francis held with his son, they could have been forgotten, or that he would forget to commend his beloved sister to the care and affection of the future king.

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* By extracting the fragment of a lance, which had entered just beneath the count's eye and penetrated through to the back of the neck. The count d'Aumale received this severe wound during a skirmish with the English before Boulogne.

Brief, however, were the hours which remained to the king to prepare for eternity, from the period that the cessation of distracting pain permitted his thoughts to be diverted from his own sufferings. His mind remained firm and clear to the last; and it is recorded that Francis made his confession and received the last sacraments of his church with great penitence and devotion. His death was apparently painless. Exhausted by suffering, the king calmly expired between two and three o'clock in the afternoon of the 31st day of March, 1547, aged fifty-two years.

The body of the king was removed, by order of his son and successor, to the castle of Haute Bruyère, after it had been carefully embalmed, where it lay in state until the 11th of April. From thence the remains of Francis were transported to the palace of the cardinal bishop of Paris at le Pont de St. Cloud. There the king's effigy, attired in regal robes, was exposed on the bier, which was surmounted by a canopy; all the deceased king's ministers and officers of state being in attendance. This empty homage continued during eleven days; the apartment was then hung with black cloth, the king's coffin, surrounded by lighted candelabra, being placed on an elevated platform in the centre of the chamber, upon which the crown and the sword of state rested.*

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* Mém. de Du Bellay. Sleidan,—Commentar. Beaucaire. Hilarion de Coste.

The coffin of Francis was removed from St. Cloud on the 21st of May, and deposited in the church of the Carmelites of the Rue du Fauxbourg St. Jacques in Paris, where the bodies of his two sons, the dauphin Francis and the duke of Orleans, awaited final interment in the royal mausoleum of the Valois at St. Denis. On the 23rd of April the king's funeral oration was preached by Pierre du Chatel, bishop of Tulle and Maçon. During the afternoon of the same day the cortège quitted Paris. Upon the coffins of the king, and of his two sons, reposed an effigy in wax of the deceased prince. The funeral car upon which the body of the king rested was preceded by twelve cardinals and the court of parliament, the members being arrayed in their scarlet gowns; and a countless throng of ecclesiastics and nobles followed.† The mournful cavalcade was received by the monks of St. Denis on its arrival at the cathedral: a very few years previously they had attended Francis I. and his imperial guest, the emperor Charles, on their pilgrimage to the sepulchres of the monarchs of France; and in procession they had followed the king when he then descended to the portal of the magnificent tomb constructed for Madame, which now yawned to receive his own mortal remains.

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* Relation des obseques de François I.," inserée par l'abbé Lambert à la fin de son, edition des Mém. de Du Bellay.

† Mém. de Vieilleville. The sum of 500,000l. Tournois was expended on the obsequies of the king, exclusive of the cost of the funeral processions through the capital, which was defrayed by the Parisians.

When the coffin of Francis was lowered into the vault, the officers of his household broke their wands, and cast them into the tomb; and the heralds proclaimed: "King Francis is no more! Long live our gracious sovereign Henry II., whom God preserve!"

CHAPTER XII.

Despondency of queen Marguerite—Poems composed by her—She receives numerous letters of condolence—The constable de Montmorency despatches a messenger to visit the queen on his behalf—Emotion displayed by Montmorency on hearing of the king's death—The king bestows the highest honours and favour upon the constable—The duchesse d'Estampes—Changes are made in the administration—Queen Marguerite departs from Tusson for Mont de Marsan—Letter written by the queen to Montmorency—Marguerite's pecuniary affairs occasion her anxiety—Expensive establishment of the princess Jane—The queen's letter to Izernay, steward of the household to the princess—Marguerite corresponds with Calvin—She invites the latter to visit her in Béarn—Coronation of king Henry II. —He invites Marguerite to be present at that ceremony—Negotiations for the marriage of the princess Jane—Queen Marguerite and her husband repair to Fontainebleau—Marguerite makes her entry into the town of Lyons with queen Catherine—Marriage of the princess Jeanne with the duke de Vendôme—Marguerite returns to Mont de Marsan—Birth of the duke of Orleans—Marguerite retires to the convent at Tusson—Gradual decay of her health—Her frequent reveries on death—Visit paid by the duke and duchess de Vendôme to Béarn—Jane's rapturous reception by her father's subjects—Queen Marguerite removes to the castle of Odos—Death of Madame de Nevers—Letter of condolence written by queen Marguerite to the duchesse de Nevers—Failing health of the queen—Her vision—Marguerite prepares for death—She relinquishes the administration of her affairs to the king of Navarre—Her last poem—She is suddenly attacked with pleurisy—Her acute sufferings and resignation—Alleged reconciliation of the queen to the Church of Rome—The last moments of the queen—Grief of the king of Navarre—Marguerite's decease is mourned by her subjects—The States of Béarn condole with the king—Henry's reply—Obsequies of queen Marguerite in the cathedral of Lescar—Her funeral oration—Lamentation of the learned men of Europe on the decease of queen Marguerite—Ode composed by Ronsard—Pretensions of queen Marguerite as an author—Her religious belief—Her devices and mottoes—Her charitable foundations—Portraits extant of Marguerite, queen of Navarre.

The light of Marguerite's life was extinguished by the death of her brother, and she may be said to have virtually descended to the tomb with him. The brief remnant of her existence was spent in obscurity; her thoughts were riveted on the past; and no solicitations could induce the queen to emerge from her seclusion, or to interest herself as formerly in literature or politics.

Marguerite spent the first forty days after her bereavement in the closest retirement at the convent of Tusson. During the whole of this period the queen suffered from severe indisposition; and she appears to have rarely quitted her apartment except to attend the daily services performed in the convent chapel. Often she solaced her grief by composing elegies, and plaintive songs on her misfortune. Some of these poems are very beautiful and touching, and betray profound desolation of spirit. Marguerite says in one poem:—

"Je n'ay plus ny père, ny mère,
Ny sœur, ny frère,
Sinon Dieu seul auquel j'espère;
Qui sur le ciel et terre impère.

"J'ay mis du tout en oubliance
Le monde, et parens et amis;
Biens et honneurs en abondance
Je les tiens pour mes ennemis."[*]

In another poem composed a month after the decease of Francis, the queen paints, in still more vivid and affecting language, her distress and isolation. She implores the aid of death to vanquish her grief; as her love for her brother augments with her sorrow, which is ever on the increase; for she says:—

"Tears so many fill my eyes,
That they see nor earth nor skies!"

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[*] Marguerites de la Marguerite—Chanson Spirituelle, page 502. For the remainder of this sonnet see Appendix No. III.

The poem composed by Marguerite at this season of poignant grief opens by a description, in simple language, of her grief, which she declares she cannot describe, “ *sinon qu'il est sans espérance.*

CHANSON FAICTE PAR LA ROYNE DE NAVARRE, UNG MOIS APRES LA MORT DU ROY.

Sur le chant :—*Jouissance vous donneray.*

Las ! tant malheureuse je suis,
Que mon malheur dire ne puis,
Sinon qu'il est sans espérance.
Desespoir est desia à l'huys,
Pour me jetter au fond du puits,
Ou n'a d'en saillir apparence.

Tant de larmes jettent mes yeux,
Qu'ils ne voyent terre ne cieux,
Telle est de leurs pleurs abondance ;
Ma bouche se plaint en tous lieux,
De mon cœur ne peut saillir mieux,
Que soupirs sans nulle allegeance.

Mort qui m'a fait ce mauvais tour,
D'abattre ma force et ma tour,
Tout mon refuge et ma défence,
N'a sçu ruiner mon amour,
Que je sens croistre nuit et jour,
Que ma douleur croist et avance.

O mort, qui le frère as dompté,
Viens doncques par ta grand' bonté.
Transpercer la sœur de ta lance.
Mon deuil par toy soit surmonté,
Car quand j'ay bien le tout compté,
Combattre te veulx à outrance.

Viens doncques, ne retarde pas,
Mais cours la poste à bien grans pas,
Je t'envoye ma deffiance.
Puisque mon frère est en tes lacs,
Prends-moy afin qu'un seul soulas,
Donne à tous deux esjouissance.*

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* Marguerites de la Marguerite—Chansons Spirituelles, p. 473. See Appendix No. IV. for the remaining verses of this poem.

Thus Marguerite poured forth the grief which wrung her heart: shut up in her lonely chamber at Tusson, she abandoned herself to sorrow; and while all the late courtiers of Francis forgot their former gallant and indulgent sovereign, absorbed by their intrigues to establish themselves in the favour of king Henry, she alone sincerely mourned his loss.

While queen Marguerite sojourned at Tusson, she received a letter from her nephew king Henry, full of cordial sympathy and condolence. The duchesse de Valentinois, now all-powerful at court, addressed to her also an epistle, which seems to have given the queen pleasure. Diane, however, with indelicate haste, took the opportunity of requesting Marguerite to bestow the post of commandant of La Grosse Tour de Bourges, an office in the queen's gift as duchess de Berry, on a friend of her own, M. de Charliez. This appointment was one of considerable value, it having a yearly salary of 1,200l. attached; nevertheless, Marguerite as soon as she quitted Tusson, sent the duchess the nomination she desired.* The queen likewise received messages of profound sympathy from many of the principal courtiers; and also from the constable de Montmorency, who was now chief of the administration, and invested with absolute powers of command over the state. When the news of the decease of his old master was conveyed to him by his nephew D'Andelot, who rode post for the purpose from Rambouillet by command of king Henry, Montmorency was much affected, and shed tears. He afterwards retired to offer intercession for the soul of the king before setting out for St. Germain, whither Henry summoned him. The king received Montmorency with distinguished honour; and forgetful of his father's dying admonitions, he re-established him in all his offices. Not content with this public testimony of affection, Henry insisted on paying the arrears of the constable's great appointments, which amounted to the yearly sum of 90,000 livres; for, during the six years of his disgrace, Francis suppressed a part of these pensions, as Montmorency had virtually retired from the service of the state. "Sire," exclaimed the constable, "it is not just that I should receive rewards, when I have as yet performed for you no service. All I demand from your majesty is a loan equivalent to two years' service."* The king, nevertheless, persisted in performing this royal act of bounty, which he was enabled to do, as such had been the frugality and economy observed by the late king during the latter years of his reign, that although the expenses of his magnificent court were not diminished, his successor found the vast sum of 900,000 crowns of clear surplus in the coffers of the state, and one quarter of the year's revenues as yet uncollected.† Restitution therefore was made to Montmorency to the amount of 100,000 golden crowns.

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8560.

Before the king's obsequies terminated, the duchess d'Estampes received an order to quit the court and retire to her husband's castle of Lambale or Des Essarts. The death of the duke of Orleans deprived the unfortunate duchess of her only protector; for her political intrigues with the emperor Charles during the recent invasion prevented the duchesse de Valentinois from favouring her retreat from court, as she was disposed to do from motives of prudence; for Diane thought it best not to establish a rigorous precedent, which might be acted upon hereafter in her own case. The duchess experienced the most heartless treatment from her contemptible husband, to whose revenge she had been abandoned. The duke d'Estampes instituted a suit against her at the instigation of the king, to obtain a legal order to appropriate the riches bestowed upon the duchess by the late king, "to indemnify himself for the wrong she had done him in appropriating for so many years the revenues attached to his office of governor of Bretagne." The king was not ashamed to commit the gross act of disrespect to his father's memory as to appear at the trial to tender his deposition as a witness for the duke d'Estampes. The duchess was despoiled of her jewels and effects, which were seized and sold by her husband; the king also compelled her to make restitution of a diamond belonging to the crown, and valued at 50,000 crowns.* Henry presented this jewel to Madame de Valentinois. It is believed that the remonstrances of Diane de Poitiers prevented the arrest of Madame d'Estampes, and her arraignment on the charge of high treason. The count de Longueval, the accomplice of her nefarious dealings with the emperor, was committed a close prisoner to the Bastille, and only recovered his liberty, at the expiration of several years, through the intercession of the cardinal de Lorraine, to whom the count made a secret offer of his fine castle and estate of Marchez, provided the cardinal procured his discharge, and a royal warrant confirming him in possession of his remaining estates.†

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* Mathieu,—Hist. de Henri II.

† De Thou,—Hist. de Son Temps.

After the interment of the king, the cardinal de Tournon was dismissed from court to his archiepiscopal see of Bourges; the admiral d'Annebaut received *congé* to retire to his country house; and the secretary of state, Bayard, a servant especially favoured by king Francis, and whose zeal in the service of the state during that monarch's captivity in Spain, had merited the especial commendation of Madame, was arrested and committed to the Bastille, for having indulged in some sarcastic allusions relative to the age of Madame de Valentinois.

The affectionate message of condolence sent by Montmorency surprised and affected the queen of Navarre; for although it is more than probable that a species of reconciliation had been effected between them through the good offices of the dauphin—a surmise confirmed by this overture on the part of the constable—Marguerite knew that her displeasure, more than any other circumstance, had contributed to procure Montmorency's banishment from court. This respectful remembrance shown by the constable for the benefactress of his youth, when he, in his turn, wielded all but supreme power in the state, is one of the most commendable traits to be met with in his career. The warm friendship which once united Marguerite to her brother's earliest companion-in-arms, however, was extinct; she could no longer find pleasure in intercourse with a mind so thoroughly selfish, bigoted, and grasping as that of Montmorency had proved itself to be. The meanness of the court which he paid to the dauphin during the lifetime of Francis; and the constable's eager desire to serve the cabals of Madame de Valentinois, were acts of ingratitude which Marguerite never forgot, though she pardoned the injuries he had attempted to inflict upon herself.

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* Le Laboureur. Additions aux Mémoires de Castlenau. Art., Duc d'Estampes. The date of the decease of the duchess d'Estampes is uncertain: it has only been proved that she was living in 1575.

† Bayle,—Dictionnaire Hist. Art., Estampes.

The obsequies of the king being terminated, Marguerite quitted Tusson, and retired to Mont de Marsan, where the king of Navarre and the princess Jeanne held their mourning state. It does not appear that in her affliction Marguerite derived much consolation from the society of her husband. Probably Henry's regrets for his imperious brother-in-law were not very intense. The king had thwarted his ambition; he had opposed the ardent affection which Henry felt for his consort, and his expectations for the establishment of his daughter and heiress; while the dependence in which Francis held the king, and his jealous watchfulness lest he should attempt to exercise marital authority over Marguerite, were causes of hostility ever animating the king of Navarre, though prudence forbad their manifestation. Henry, moreover, had long ceased to hope that restitution of his kingdom of Navarre would be made to him by the arms or from the diplomacy of king Francis: a new reign had dawned, and a young king, surrounded by valiant nobles ardently desirous to distinguish themselves in arms, might achieve victories over the Imperialists, brilliant as the fight of Marignano, which had inaugurated the reign of Francis. The same sympathies, besides, which bound Marguerite to her brother, never existed between the king of Navarre and herself. Henry was of a harder and of a more matter-of-fact disposition; it was seldom he viewed the world and its busy occupations and pleasures in a poetical light; nor did he sympathize with that passionate love of the ideal so strongly characteristic both of Francis and Marguerite. The princess Jane also inherited, with most of Marguerite's accomplishments, her father's calm and equable disposition—a character which, during her subsequent stirring and eventful career, shielded her from many a bitter pang.

Soon after Marguerite arrived at Mont de Marsan, she replied to the condolences sent her by the constable de Montmorency, in the following terms:—

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO THE CONSTABLE ANNE DE MONTMORENCY.*

"Mon Nepveu,—You will not find it strange if I hasten to thank you, as you have indeed given me occasion; for I perceive by the discourse of the messenger whom you have sent, that time has not so greatly triumphed over your memory as to efface the remembrance of the love which since your childhood I have borne you. I pray you continue to me this affection, and so become the support of my old age, even as my hand guided the wand which directed your youth. You possess many friends; but, remember, only one person has cared for you like a mother—one, who will always retain that name and character in all things she can perform or desire for you and yours.

"My answer to the remainder of the message which you sent to me, I have communicated to this trusty envoy, in order not to weary you by a longer letter.

"Vostre bonne tante, mère, et vraye amie,

"MARGUERITE."

The message which the constable sent to the queen probably had reference to the confirmation of the pension of 25,000 livres Tournois, which she received from the crown as a princess of the blood royal; for pecuniary anxieties compelled poor Marguerite to cease for a time from the indulgence of her sorrow, and to make application to her royal nephew that this income might be secured anew to her. Marguerite was far from possessing great wealth, notwithstanding the affection borne towards her by her brother; for she who asked so liberally for others forgot her own wants. Her revenues, nevertheless, were sufficient for the honourable maintenance of her rank. Most biographers who have touched upon this period of the queen's life, represent her, however, as suffering from great poverty after the decease of king Francis, who, it is stated, without assigning his sister a fixed income from his privy purse, shared all he possessed with her. In addition to this allowance of 25,000 livres from the state, which king Henry at once confirmed to his aunt, Marguerite possessed the revenues of the duchies of Alençon and Berry for life; the income from this latter duchy being secured to her, independent of control from the king of Navarre, by her marriage contract. The queen, moreover, annually received 10,000 livres Tournois from the heirs of her first husband, the duke d'Alençon, as a jointure; this income was secured to her on the towns of Verneuil, Séés et Bernay, the viscounty of Beaumont, and the baronies of Sonnoys, la Guierche, and of Puies. The king of Navarre, in addition to the revenues he received from his hereditary principalities, and the counties of Armagnac and Perche, ceded to him on his marriage with the king's sister, enjoyed a pension of 24,000 livres Tournois,* conferred by the bounty of Francis. His salary as governor of Guyenne secured him a further revenue of 10,000 livres. The united income of Marguerite and her husband therefore, without including the revenues they derived from their domains of Bearn, Foix, and Gascony, and the two duchies conferred as appanages upon the queen by her brother, amounted to 69,000 livres. In those days this sum alone would have formed no inconsiderable revenue; for the emperor Charles, it must be remembered, asked only for 100,000 livres as a suitable provision for the duke of Orleans on his proposed marriage with the infanta Maria, with a jointure for the bride of 40,000 livres, though the princess was to bring her husband a principality as a dowry.

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* MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8507.

The anxiety displayed by Marguerite to obtain the confirmation of the pension granted to her on the civil list, doubtless arose from the heavy expense incurred in maintaining a separate establishment at the court of France for the princess Jane of Navarre. King Francis aided his sister to defray the costs of Jane's household, which were very considerable, as the young princess was given to profuse expenditure. Instead of residing at the court of her royal mother at Pau, or Nérac, Jane's home, by the despotic decree of Francis, had been at Plessis-les-Tours, or other of the royal palaces of France. She there maintained great state: amongst other officers the princess had a steward of her household, chaplains, physicians, besides several ladies of honour in constant attendance. Now that Marguerite no longer received private aid from the crown to support this additional establishment, she naturally felt anxious that the pension granted to her by the late king should be confirmed; as without it, her means were not affluent enough to defray the expenses of her own royal state, and her daughter's household, and still to continue the vast charitable donations she was in the habit of making. This consideration prompted the words used by the queen in a letter to Izernay, steward to the princess Jane, and which have been construed into an admission by the queen that her circumstances were really inadequate to her rank. Marguerite expressed herself thus: "You will render me greater service by remaining where you are (at the court), in order to attend to my affairs, and especially to see that my pension of 25,000 livres is confirmed; as without it, you know it will be impossible for me to continue to hold my accustomed state; for I have only money left to serve me to the end of this year, a fact which without great need I should not mention, as it is not my habit to solicit favours. If I had father, mother, brother, uncle, or a single near relative left, I would entreat him to plead in my behalf. But as the king has been pleased to promise to stand me in lieu of all, it will not displease him if I solicit his aid, for without his favour and bounty I cannot subsist, considering that I have no other means on earth than what he and the king[*] have given me; but I have always contented myself with this, as much as if I had received a large portion of the wealth of my house."[†] In another letter written soon after to this same M. D'Izernay, the queen remonstrates gravely on the excessive expenditure in the household of her daughter; she says:[‡] "M. D'Izernay, I have received your letter, and considered what you state relative to the expenses of my daughter's household, which you give me to understand cannot be diminished, as my said daughter being with the court renders it, you say, indispensable that she should continue to have the same number of officers. The king of Navarre and myself find such a state of things insufferable (as we have before done, on the report made to us of these expenses by our cousin M. le vicomte,* and by the written statement brought to me by the chevalier Pierre Gaultier), and I certify to you that it will be impossible to continue these expenses, as we have not means to defray them. I am well aware, M. D'Izernay, that you strive to acquit yourself of your office so that there shall be excess in nothing; but if care be not taken, and a more moderate expenditure introduced in many departments, I fear it will end in grievous confusion. No person has prompted me to complain of these expenses; for nobody at court has ever spoken to me on the subject, nor even written, excepting my said cousin the viscount, who spoke to the king of Navarre; also from what I learned in the memorial brought to me by the chevalier. The king of Navarre, however, when he was last at court, thought the cost of his daughter's establishment wonderfully great: therefore, I beg of you, M. D'Izernay, to make all possible retrenchment; for with the many burdens I have to support, it will be out of my power to bear such excessive charges."

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* Or 2,000 pounds sterling.

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[*] Francis I.

[†] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 8560. The enormous wealth of Madame had been settled on her grandson Henry II., so that the queen of Navarre received no share either of her paternal or of her maternal heritage.

[‡] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. de Béth., No. 9127.

Amongst the private papers of Francis a schedule was discovered of various private debts which he owed. On this list was a sum of 4,885 livres Tournois, being the value of a quantity of silver plate, which the king borrowed from the duke and duchess d'Alençon, in the year 1522, at a period of financial difficulty, to be converted into coin. This debt king Henry, on his accession, honourably proposed to liquidate. The queen of Navarre, however, declined to receive the money; but desired that it might be given to the sisters and coheiresses of the duke d'Alençon.† If Marguerite's pecuniary circumstances had been so limited at this period as to render it difficult for her to array herself in apparel becoming the splendour of her rank, as it has been erroneously asserted, she certainly would not have refused this sum—a large one in those days—for all the personal effects of the duke d'Alençon were adjudged to his widow; and, moreover, it is probable that the plate lent to king Francis was her own private property.

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* Gaston de Bourbon, viscount de Lavedan.

† The duchess dowager de Vendôme, and the marchioness de Montferrat.

These financial details proved repugnant beyond measure to Marguerite's preoccupied and saddened mind. She who wished to have no further dealings with the world, but desired to pass the remainder of her life in the performance of acts of devotion, was aroused from her grief to attend to details of all others the most vexatious and unsatisfactory. Marguerite shrank even from intercourse of the most cheering description with her friends; her recreation consisted in the diligent study of theology; and she seems to have resumed her investigation on the grand question of reform. Calvin's great work, "The Institutes of the Christian Religion," was now published; a book that the zealot Florimond de Rémond calls the Alcoran, or the Talmud of Heresy; and perhaps the arguments of the rigid reformer may have afforded the queen, at this period, much matter for reflection. This surmise seems the more probable, as Marguerite soon after opened a correspondence with Calvin; and it is asserted that she wrote to him the most pressing entreaties to visit her in Béarn, that he might point out wherein lay her past errors, and lead her back to the truth.* Calvin dedicated his book to Francis I., who accepted the homage with his usual inconsistency, greatly to the indignation of the Faculties of Paris. The stern theologian of Geneva bore Marguerite affectionate and grateful remembrance for the protection which she had accorded him during his stormy sojourn in France. In his epistles, Calvin mentions the queen of Navarre in most eulogistic terms, as one highly exalted by God, and raised to promote the advancement of the true faith.† Nevertheless, the intolerant tendencies of the new government, headed by Montmorency and the Guises, became so clearly developed in the earlier months of king Henry's reign, that Calvin thought it more prudent to abstain from visiting France.

A few weeks after Marguerite's return home, the king of Navarre quitted Mont de Marsan for St. Germain-en-Laye, to be present at the coronation of king Henry; which event took place in the cathedral of Rheims, July

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* De Rémond,—Hist. de l'Heresie,

† "Quod Deus illâ usus fuerit ad regnum suum promovenduer." Calvini Ep. 1545.

25th, 1547. The king sent Marguerite a most pressing invitation to attend this august ceremony; but the queen declined, excusing herself on the plea of her failing health. The trial of that scene would have proved more than Marguerite's fortitude could sustain: imagination must have reverted to the brilliant assemblage collected within the venerable cathedral thirty-three years previously, when her brother, the gallant king Francis I., received the enthusiastic homage of his subjects in the presence of Madame, of Philiberte de Savoie, of Guillaume Briçonnet, and of many other beloved friends of her youth, over whom the grave had now closed.

During the summer, therefore, of 1547, Marguerite was left alone at Mont de Marsan to her meditations and prayers, while France hailed with enthusiastic transport and splendid rejoicings the accession of the new monarch. But the queen's thoughts and joys, when directed earthwards, centred amid the gloomy sepulchres of St. Denis, where those she had best loved on earth reposed. Rabelais, in apostrophizing Marguerite's abstraction of spirit, exclaims:—

> "Esprit abstrait, ravy et estatic,
> Qui fréquentant les cieux, ton origine,
> As delaissé ton hoste et domestic.
> Voudrois-tu point faire quelque sortie,
> De ton manoir divin perpétual?"

After the coronation was over, Marguerite wrote again to her nephew, fearing that her refusal to be present at that ceremony might have grieved him, as the king had shown great solicitude to please her. She says in this letter, of which only a fragment remains: "Therefore, monseigneur, as the messenger I send will tell you everything concerning me, and my hope that God will speedily restore to me my health, which has totally failed during the past four months, I will only add that I will not omit then to pay you a visit, as I need not weary you longer with my bad writing, except to supplicate Him who has just bestowed His sacred unction upon you, to give you all the prosperity and blessing which He has conferred on your predecessors, with a long and happy life."[*]

[*] MS. Bibl. Roy., F. Dupuy, No. 569.

Marguerite, however, did not visit the court until the autumn of the following year, 1548, when she journeyed thither to be present at the solemnization of the nuptials of her daughter with Antoine, duke de Vendôme. The queen seems to have spent the intervening months in the profoundest seclusion, probably at Mont de Marsan; as she found the mild air of this place beneficial to her health. The king of Navarre returned home after the coronation; and perhaps it was on account of Marguerite's precarious health that he did not accompany the king on his progress through part of the kingdom, which occurred during the latter end of the year 1547, immediately after the *accouchement* of queen Catherine, who gave birth, at Fontainebleau, to her third child, the princess Claude. The only affair in which Marguerite concerned herself during this period was to write a pressing letter to the count de Villars, who had replaced her friend and favourite, Monsieur de Burie, as lieutenant-governor of Guyenne, praying him to protect the vassals of her barony of Marelières from the extortions of the Sicur de Boisserolles, who, without the queen's sanction, had usurped authority over her bailiwick of Vallerangue.

Early in the year 1548, king Henry had commenced negotiations with the king of Navarre for the marriage of the princess Jane, with Antoine, duke de Vendôme, who had long made ardent suit for the hand of the princess. This affair, therefore, compelled Marguerite to accompany her husband to the court of France, where the royal pair arrived about the end of July. It has been stated that this projected union was exceedingly displeasing to Marguerite. The reasons for this supposed aversion on the queen's part, if it ever existed, have never been satisfactorily explained. The duke De Vendôme was the son of the queen's sister-in-law and greatest friend, Françoise d'Alençon. He was wealthy and chivalrous, and held the first rank in France after the king's children. The duke, moreover, was suspected of favouring reform; and it was believed that he had secretly accepted the doctrine of Calvin. Some authors have asserted that a suspicion of the deviation of her future son-in-law from the faith of his ancestors was the cause of Marguerite's objection to the alliance; but the whole tenour of the queen's conduct and opinions are sufficient to disprove this statement. Marguerite's objections, if such indeed existed, might have been more reasonably founded on her distrust of the duke's character; whose many amiable qualities were marred by a timid irresolution and changeableness of purpose, which in after life proved the bane of his consort's happiness, and of his own honour and prosperity.

Before the celebration of her daughter's nuptials, the queen of Navarre accompanied queen Catherine to Lyons, and rode in the procession on the sumptuous entry of Henry and his consort into that city. It was Marguerite's last farewell to the pomps and grandeur of the world, in which no princess had participated to a greater extent than herself; and from thenceforth she appeared no more in state ceremonies. The litter of the queen of Navarre followed after that in which queen Catherine and the princess Marguerite rode. It was draped with black velvet; and the queen was accompanied by her daughter, the princess Jane. The duke de Vendôme rode on horseback by the side of the litter; and it was observed that he constantly held earnest discourse with queen Marguerite.* The festivities given by the town of Lyons in honour of king Henry's visit, continued for the space of a week; but Marguerite's delicate health and depression of spirits prevented her from being present at these fêtes.

On the first day of October the court quitted Lyons, and removed to Moulins; at which place the marriage of the princess Jane was solemnized. The ceremonial, though magnificent, was far from exhibiting the refinement which characterized the fêtes given by Francis on the occasion of his niece's betrothal to the duke of Cleves, at Châtellerault. The duke de Vendôme, with his accustomed vacillation, displayed on his marriage day some uneasiness respecting the validity of this former contract; doubts which were dissipated by the assurances of the sénéchale de Poitou, and Madame de Silly, *gouvernante* of the young princess, that the former marriage had been a mere ceremony, persisted in despite the protests made by Jane.† The dower settled by the duke de Vendôme on his bride was a very large one, and must

* Godefroy,—Cérém. de France.

† Brantôme.

have given satisfaction to the king and queen of Navarre; though the latter, nevertheless, it has been asserted, signed the marriage contract by the express command of her nephew, and retired afterwards to conceal her tears. The duke assigned the princess a jointure of 100,000 livres Tournois, secured upon lands in Anjou, Picardy, and Flanders.* Marguerite's own jointure, as settled by her marriage contract, negotiated by the duchess d'Angoulême, amounted to the sum of 20,000 livres Tournois, in addition to the enjoyment of the revenues of the duchies of Alençon and Berry, conferred upon her by king Francis. The marriage ceremony between the duke de Vendôme and the princess Jane of Navarre, was performed on the 18th of October, 1548, in the chapel of the castle of Moulins, in the presence of the king and queen Catherine, the king and queen of Navarre, and the court.

After the departure of her daughter, Marguerite returned to Fontainebleau, and remained with the queen some few weeks longer. But all was changed now in that beautiful palace, the abode in which Francis took supreme delight; and where, more than at any other spot, memorials of his taste, luxury, and refinement, were lavished. The splendour of the buildings which the king had there constructed, adorned with his motto, initials, and badge, in exquisite fretwork; the gardens which he planned and embellished with flowers and shrubs, collected at vast cost from every known clime; and the library, that memento of his learning and love of literature, reminded Marguerite of the happiest hours of her existence, when all had been shared by her with the brother she mourned. Few of the late king's friends remained at court to greet Marguerite; for very dexterous must that genius have been, able alike to conciliate king Francis, Madame d'Estampes, and the respective factions of Henry II., Madame de Valentinois, and the constable de Montmorency,—these two latter personages reigning now with omnipotent sway. Queen Eleanor had taken her leave for ever of France, where she declared that the most miserable portion of her existence had been spent, and had retired to Brussels on the termination of the funeral obsequies of king Francis;* Marguerite also, though treated with the greatest kindness and respect by her nephew, felt that her reign was over; the crescent of Diane de Poitiers effaced the *marguerite* predominant everywhere during the late reign. Queen Catherine herself, despite her masterly address, was alike subject to its influence. The colours of la grande sénéchale, as Diane was now called, were publicly worn by the king, and even floated beside the royal banner of France over the *pavilion royal*, wherever Henry sojourned. The king, moreover, in order to display his complete devotion to Diane de Poitiers, assumed her device of a rising moon or crescent, with the motto, "Donec totum impleat orbem."

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* Favyn,—Hist. de Navarre.

Marguerite, therefore, soon took her last farewell of a palace associated with so many depressing reminiscences. The queen commenced her journey back into Béarn about the middle of November, and spent the Christmas at Pau. In February of the following year, queen Catherine gave birth to her second son at St. Germain-en-Laye. The king despatched M. de Bonnivet to carry the joyous news to the king and queen of Navarre, who were then sojourning, for the benefit of Marguerite's health, at Mont de Marsan.

"Monseigneur," wrote the queen in reply to this notification, "after our arrival at this place of Mont de Marsan, where we received the news of the nativity of Monseigneur le dauphin, we have also just heard of the happiness which God has conferred upon you by the birth of M. d'Orleans. We cannot, monseigneur, sufficiently thank this gracious God, who bestows upon you such bountiful mercies, and by the birth of your four beautiful children,† makes us amends for the loss which the late king experienced of almost all his. Monseigneur, the soul of the late king doubtless rejoices in heaven at the mercy bestowed upon you, as all your good and loyal servants do here below, amongst whom, on this happy event, I feel the joy that ought to inspire her who is now the oldest branch of our glorious race. I do not doubt, monseigneur, that you return hearty thanks to God when you remember the great blessings which He has bestowed upon you, in making you monarch of the grandest and most noble kingdom in Christendom, in giving you a consort who brings you more beautiful offspring than can be seen anywhere, and in rendering you, while in youth and health, beloved and honoured by every one."*

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* Eleanor all along manifested a very keen sense of her wrongs. Speaking to the count palatine Frederic, her old admirer, in 1538, on her position in France, she said: "Mais pour cette cour de France Dieu sait comme je suis traitée, et la manière dont le roi en use avec moi!" Queen Eleanor died February 18, 1558, at Talavera.

† The dauphin Francis, the princesses Elizabeth and Claude, and the duke of Orleans, upon whose birth Marguerite congratulates her nephew. The little prince, however, survived his birth only a few weeks.

During the whole of the summer of the year 1549 Marguerite's health declined; but so gently that her failing strength, rather than physical suffering, warned those around that her malady was making progress. The king of Navarre was her constant companion; and for several months during the spring, Marguerite and her husband travelled from place to place, as the air seemed to benefit the queen, and to relieve her habitual depression. Amongst other journeys, Marguerite took one to Tusson, and spent several weeks at the convent there, where she had commanded apartments to be constructed for her use. Here the queen devoted herself to religious exercises, and suffered no worldly interests to distract her thoughts: in the silence of the cloister, Marguerite meditated on the change that awaited her, and which, from the period of her brother's decease, she had predicted would soon arrive. She joined the nuns, it is recorded, in all their devotions; for Marguerite's enlightened mind, fervently as she repudiated many of the errors of the Romish faith, yet bowed itself in adoration before the Almighty, and worshipped Him in spirit and in truth, without offence to her conscience, amid those to whom her own better knowledge was yet hidden. Sometimes the queen assumed the office of abbess, and conducted the devotions of the nuns. "Often," says Brantôme, "she was seen to perform the functions of abbess, and lead the choir of nuns at matins and vespers."†

Marguerite's thoughts were now often fixed upon death, which she regarded at times with great apprehension. The condition of departed spirits during their separation from the body was a theme upon which she frequently mused; sometimes her ideas on the subject were gloomy and unsatisfactory, and served to increase the depression of her mind. One day some person was discoursing with the queen on the unspeakable joys of Paradise, and of the future glorious destiny of the children of God. "All this is true," replied Marguerite with a sigh; "but alas! before that glorious consummation the body slumbers long beneath in the earth." At other periods Marguerite wrote and conversed on the theme, investing it with the glowing imagery of her poetical mind. She then descanted on the happy condition of the departed, at rest in their bright abodes above. Like—as after the decease of her little niece the princess Charlotte, Marguerite comforted herself by imagining the beatitude of the soul of the child she so fondly loved, in the following words, which she makes the spirit of the departed princess utter from above:—

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F., No. 8651.

† Brantôme,—Dames Illustres. Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

"Je suis icy belle, claire et luysante,
Pleine de Dieu et de luy jouyesantè,
N'en ayez dueil ne desolation,
Contentez vous!"—

so the queen sought to calm her fears; and by the exercise of prayer and faith to divest death of its terrors.

Marguerite always displayed great eagerness to investigate the theory of spiritual existence, and the nature of angelic beings. She was morbidly sensitive in her belief in the communion of departed spirits with their friends on earth. This feeling had the effect of elevating her faith and inspiring comfort, rather than of exciting superstitious fear. The mysticism which she derived from the bishop of Meaux, clung to Marguerite to the last hour of her existence. Her desire to investigate the nature of the soul led the queen one day to remain beside the dying bed of one of her maids of honour, to whom she was much attached. The sufferer probably was Florette de Sarra, one of Marguerite's most favoured attendants, and who died in 1542, to the inexpressible grief of her royal mistress. The queen sate by the couch weeping, but yet watching every movement of the dying girl with intense eagerness. Even after death had ensued, Marguerite continued to gaze upon the pallid features of the corpse with earnest steadfastness. At length one of her ladies ventured to ask the queen the reason of her singular proceeding. Marguerite replied, "that having often heard the most learned doctors and ecclesiastics assert that on the demise of the body the immortal spirit was set at liberty and unloosed, she could not repress her anxious desire to observe if any symptom or indication of such a separation were visible; also, if the spirit took a visible form, or uttered any sounds on its departure; but that nothing of the kind had she been able to discover."* Throughout Marguerite's poetical works, repeated indications are to be found of the hold this subject had acquired over her mind, and of her strange musings respecting it.

After the queen returned from Tusson, the princess Jane of Navarre and her husband the duke de Vendôme, visited Béarn, to receive the homage of the States of the principality, as king Henry's successors. The young duchess was received with transports of joy by her father's subjects. "Oh then what joy was that felt by the people of Béarn and Foix, who believed that hitherto their princess, whom they dearly loved, was held a prisoner in France!" exclaims the historian of Navarre and Béarn,† with loyal enthusiasm. "She was received with incredible pomp: the people flocked together to salute her, and to render her homage as their future rightful mistress, and one whom they expected to prove nothing less than a second Marguerite; like her who had been the precious flower growing in the parterre of that royal House of Navarre, and the odour of whose perfume attracted into Béarn the choicest minds of Europe, like as a fragrant bed of thyme draws myriads of bees to suck its sweetness. With all these learned men, our Marguerite—who surpassed them all in wisdom—conferred; discussing philosophy, theology, and history—a science she devoutly loved."

Marguerite, however, the delight of the learned, and the honour of her country, was mortal; and fortunate was it for her when human plaudits and human learning faded before the ravages of disease, that her mind trained betimes to wisdom, had fervently sought the favour of Him who had endowed her with such rare intellectual capacity. A great work had been assigned Marguerite to achieve; and an awful responsibility was attached to the power she wielded; yet laudable as was the conduct of the queen, her devotion to her brother, and her fear of grieving him, proved the pre-eminent obstacle in her path. Under God, Marguerite preserved the reformed churches throughout France from annihilation: but the faith which was tolerated only at her intercession, and not recognised by the state, experienced bloody persecution; for strong enough to offend, yet too weak to oppose effectual resistance to their oppressors, the French reformers afterwards reproached the queen for giving impetus to a movement which she shrank from guiding. "This queen, nevertheless, was the refuge and harbour to which all who were in distress resorted," says a contemporary orator of the day. "The sight of the friendless gathered into the port of her royal compassion was worth beholding; some she rescued from beggary; others who were just recovering from frightful shipwreck, she led to the haven of security; and others, again, sheltered themselves behind her power, and used it as the buckler of Ajax, to defend themselves against their persecutors."*

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* Brantôme,—Dames Illustres. Vie de Marguerite de Valois.

† Olhagaray.

About the autumn of the year, queen Marguerite removed to the castle of Odos, in the county of Bigorre. Her malady steadily augmented, and painful prostration of strength succeeded the most trifling exertion, although the queen was not confined to her bed. The castle of Odos was situated a league from the city of Tarbes, and at about a distance of two leagues and a half from Bagnères. It was thought that probably the mineral waters at this latter place might prove serviceable to Marguerite's complaint, as they were deemed efficacious in pulmonary affections.

During the first few weeks of her sojourn at Odos, intelligence reached Marguerite of the death of Marie d'Albret, duchesse de Nevers, the lady who had borne so conspicuous a part in the ceremonial of queen Eleanor's entry into France, and her coronation. The son of this lady, who was renowned for her virtues and piety, espoused in 1538, in the chapel of the Louvre, Marguerite de Vendôme, sister of the duke de Vendôme. The young duchess de Nevers was a great favourite with Marguerite, as she had also been with the late king, who admired her sprightly wit. The duchess lived on most affectionate terms with her mother-in-law, and as Marguerite was informed of her deep affliction at the death of Madame de Nevers, she wrote to offer condolence and comfort. This beautiful letter possesses additional value and interest as being one of the last, if not the very last epistle written by the queen of Navarre. The hand that guided that eloquent pen was soon to rest in the grave; and the memory of her gracious gentleness alone remain to be treasured by those whom she had honoured with her friendship.

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* Ste. Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre.

QUEEN MARGUERITE TO THE DUCHESSE DE NEVERS.*

"Ma Nièce,—The king of Navarre and myself, being informed of the decease of our cousin Madame de Nevers your mother, resolved to despatch this letter; not, however, in the hope of its being able to afford consolation to M. de Nevers and yourself—for my own experience of the grief felt at the loss of a good mother has shown me that no other than he Almighty consoler of affliction can mitigate your sorrow;—but we write to entreat you, daughter and sweetheart mine, by the tender affection which unites you to your husband, to exert your fortitude that you may aid him to support this affliction, in which we share, being so nearly related to the deceased, and having borne her such warm friendship, which she indeed deserved; for she was a lady whose many virtues had been sorely tried by tribulation, the glory of which shall redound to her immortal honour. Moreover, in addition to the eternal happiness of which I believe she is now a partaker, she is fortunate in leaving behind her such a representative as my nephew, her son; she can, therefore, scarce be considered as departed; but she still remains with you, and your beautiful children, in whom I already perceive the dawn of the many virtues which distinguished their grandmother. Therefore, I comfort myself in Him who has bestowed upon you such abundant graces, even as if you were my own children; for I bear you no less affection. I pray you both then to take care of your health, to console yourselves in God, and to hold and believe me always,

"Votre bonne tante, mère, et vraye amie,

"MARGUERITE."

The change to the milder air of Tarbes, meanwhile, produced no beneficial alteration in the queen's health. Her strength continued to waste away; and as she grew weaker, a drowsiness, which her physicians in vain tried to combat, oppressed her. During her feverish slumbers, Marguerite's imagination still pursued the theme which so deeply occupied her waking thoughts—the nature and occupations of disembodied spirits. One day she dreamed that a beautiful and majestic woman, clad in vestments of dazzling whiteness, appeared by her couch; and holding towards her a garland of many-coloured flowers, assured her in melodious accents, that ere many days elapsed, God himself would place a crown of immortality on her brow.[*] This vision made the most profound impression on the queen's mind; and she regarded it as a warning of her immediate departure. The dread of death now vanished, which before had weighed at times with depressing influence on Marguerite's mind; so that in moments of weakness she had almost refused to believe in her peril, saying, "that she was not yet so aged, but what she thought her life might yet be spared to her for a few years longer."[‡]

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* MS. Bib. Roy., F. de Béth, No. 8516.

On rising from her mysterious slumber, the queen prepared for death. She relinquished the administration of her private revenues to the king of Navarre; she refused to sign any *ordonnance*, or to grant audiences; and she dictated her last wishes with respect to her domestics. The queen also employed herself in writing letters of farewell to her friends. Her last adieu to poetry, that beautiful art which had embellished her existence, and that she so fervently loved, was this touching verse, written only a few days before the fatal attack which terminated her career:—

"Je cherche aultant la croix et la desire
Comme aultrefoys je l'ay voulu fouyr;
Je cherche aultant par tourment en jouyr
Comme aultrefoys j'ay craint son dur martyre,
Car ceste croix mon ame à Dieu attire;
Dont tous les biens qu'au monde puis avoir
Quicter je veulx, la croix me doibt souffire!"[†]

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[*] Sainte Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre de l'Incomparable Marguerite.

[†] Brantôme,—Dames Illustres.

[‡] MS. Bibl. Roy., Suppl. Fran., No. 2286.

These lines conclude the last poetical work composed by Marguerite, "Le Miroir de Jesus Christ Crucifié." They are not a part of the poem which Marguerite survived not long enough to revise, but are merely appended to the manuscript, as if the dying queen with her own hand sought in these few lines briefly to embody the experiences of her life, the last longings of her spirit, and the burden of her numerous sacred compositions. The poem, which probably was commenced after the decease of king Francis, opens, with a humble acknowledgment of her dependence on the merits of Jesus alone, in the following words:—

"Seigneur Jesus! que je dois advouer
Pour mon example, et très cher myrouer,
En toy me puys mirer, cognoistre, et veoir,
Car de me voir hors de toy n'ay pouvoir."

The queen presented this manuscript a few days before her decease to an ecclesiastic, Olivier, a doctor in theology, and probably one of the priests who assisted Marguerite in her last moments, as the queen never made formal profession of the reformed faith. This precious relic was carefully treasured by Olivier, and published by him in 1556, with a dedication to Marguerite de France, the well-beloved niece, and goddaughter of the queen of Navarre. He tells the princess in the preface, how her august aunt had scarcely written the concluding lines of the poem, "when her last hour overtook her, and the Holy Spirit commanded her to cease from her labours." Olivier continues to explain, that the work, therefore, probably was deficient in the polish and accuracy of Marguerite's other compositions; and that the poem might have been even lost to posterity from accidental causes by the suddenness of the queen's removal. "But the Lord God, madame, who has ordained that pious and sacred books shall be written for our edification, and to enhance His own glory, decreed that this holy poem should be committed to my care by the royal hands of this said princess a few days before her decease; the which I have since preserved with as much caution and solicitude as heretofore that potent prince, Alexander the Macedonian, treasured the Iliad of Homer."*

On the evening of the 1st of December, 1549, Marguerite, attended by the few personages who were now admitted to her presence, amongst whom was her chief physician, d'Escuranis, ventured out upon an open balcony to look at a comet which had recently appeared, and that popular superstition regarded as a prognostic of the death of pope Paul III. She remained for some little time silently contemplating the heavens, but made no remark; when M. d'Escuranis, who stood beside her, suddenly perceived that the queen's mouth was drawn a little awry.† Marguerite, however, complained of no pain; but, complying with the entreaties of her physician, she re-entered her apartment, and immediately retired to bed. Perhaps the night air to which Marguerite had so imprudently exposed herself, might have given a sudden shock to her system; or, it might be, that the sight of the brilliant comet recalled agitating reminiscences of the death-bed of Madame, and of the still more recent loss of her brother, which acted with disastrous effect on the queen's enfeebled constitution.

Marguerite continued very ill, and unable to rise from her bed for the following few days. At length her disorder settled into a severe attack of pleurisy.‡ Her sufferings were soon intense, but she endured her pain with fortitude and resignation. The queen received the outward consolations of religion from the hands of ministers of the Romish Church. It is even asserted by historians of this faith, that Marguerite, previous to her decease, made a declaration to the effect that she had never in reality swerved from her allegiance to Rome; but what she had done for the reformation was rather out of compassion for its persecuted ministers, than from disaffection to the ancient faith.§ The sole authority upon which this statement rests is that of an obscure Franciscan monk, named

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* Dédicace à Marguerite de France, Poëme du Miroir de Jesus Christ, par Madame Marguerite de France, Royne de Navarre, publié par F. Pierre Olivier, docteur theologien. Paris, 1556.

† Brantôme,—Dames Illustres.

‡ Favyn,—Hist. de Navarre.

§ De Rémond,—Hist. de l'Hérésie.

Gilles Caillau, quoted by Florimond de Rémond, who states that he administered the sacrament of extreme unction to the queen; and whose testimony has been eagerly adopted and reproduced by Romish historians anxious to redeem Marguerite's fair fame from the stain of heresy. But if Marguerite, on her death-bed, wished to abjure the principles which she had striven throughout life to maintain, both by her writings and by her example, why was not her recantation received and recorded by some prelate or other personage whose reputation would have placed his testimony above dispute, instead of by a monk so obscure that his name is never mentioned in history, except as the witness of this alleged fact? Was the solemn reconciliation of the queen of Navarre to the Church whose doctrine she had openly condemned, a matter of such insignificant import, and so devoid of triumph, that a friar only was present during her last moments to grant her absolution for the deadly sin of heresy, when Marguerite's illness lasted twenty days from the period at which she took to her bed by the advice of her physician d'Escuranis? Is it the custom, moreover, of the Roman Catholic hierarchy to suffer a great princess, an obedient daughter of the Church, and the consort of the sovereign under whose civil dominion it exists, to expire without episcopal benediction when there was no cause to withhold it? Marguerite's old friend, the cardinal d'Armagnac, bishop of Rhodez, who had grieved so much at what he deemed the perversion of his royal mistress, would doubtless have joyfully received her acknowledgment of perfect communion with the Church to which he belonged, and have ministered spiritual comfort during the queen's prolonged agonies. The castle of Odos, besides, was situated only a league from Tarbes, the residence of a bishop who presided over one of the most important sees of southern France. It is to be believed, also, that Marguerite herself, aware from the first of the fatal nature of her sudden attack, had she so solemn an act to perform as reconciliation with the Church during her last moments—a deed upon which she then must have thought her salvation depended—would have expressed some anxiety for the accustomed ceremonial deemed indispensable under such circumstances; nor would the king of Navarre have omitted to summon to Odos, during the twenty days of his consort's illness, those prelates whose dignity entitled them to assist in her last hours a royal penitent and the wife of their sovereign. Had the queen of Navarre abjured in very deed the opinions which stirred up the zeal of the Theologians of Paris, and incurred for her the enmity of the Roman priesthood, the Church would have belied its usual practice by concealing the triumphant conversion of so illustrious a personage, one eminent also for her learning, by allowing Marguerite to be shrived in secret by a Franciscan friar, while the prelates and clergy of Béarn and Foix remained aloof.

During the three last days of her illness—days of excessive physical anguish—Marguerite lost the power of speech.* It must have been, therefore, during this period, when suffering had probably rendered her unconscious of all around, that Marguerite received extreme unction from the hands of the priest Gilles Caillau. A few moments before she expired, utterance returned again. With a convulsive movement, the queen grasped a cross which lay beside her on the bed, and pressed it to her lips; then faintly uttering three times the holy name of Jesus, she calmly breathed her last.† "Alas!" exclaims the historian of Navarre,‡ "who can describe the mourning made throughout Béarn and Foix! It seemed as if the sun had withdrawn its rays, so that the day became as gloomy night, that the Muses had fled from earth, and that all the learned, wearied of existence, fell, annihilated beneath the same dread blow!"

The king of Navarre retired to Pau after the decease of his consort. His grief for her loss was vehement, and he refused to take comfort. Until Marguerite rested in her grave, the king of Navarre scarcely knew how much he depended on her pure and upright counsels and vigorous intellect. In losing her, Henry felt that the light of his reign was extinct; and his dejection was such that afterwards he was never able to apply to business, but continued to wander from place to place, devoid alike of interests or design. "What can we say of the grief of our king, deprived of his Marguerite?" says a contemporary historian,* "He no longer practised that settled method of life which was his custom. His actions became uncertain; he showed himself discontented with all; and like those who are accustomed to a maritime life, though they desire to quit the sea, yet wander unconsciously from vessel to vessel, and always find the waves beneath them, so this poor prince fled from sorrow; but the farther he went the greater evil it inflicted, waging within him a perpetual warfare."

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* Ste. Marthe,—Epitaphe de la Reine de Navarre.

† Ch. de Sainte Marthe,—Oraison Funèbre.

‡ Olhagaray.

Soon after the decease of queen Marguerite, the States of Béarn, and a deputation from the nobles of Henry's principalities, waited upon their bereaved sovereign to present an address of condolence. The emotion displayed by Henry was great. His reply is given at length by the historian Olhagaray; but the king makes no mention in this address of the "edifying devotion" displayed by his consort for the Roman Church during the last hours of her existence: on the contrary, Henry used many forms of speech peculiar in those days to the adherents of Calvin and Luther. His answer was as follows to the condolences of the States:—"Ah, my beloved subjects, I know that wisdom teaches us to refrain from lamentation, that we may diligently seek the best remedy to obviate the ills of life. Reason likewise, I know, inculcates this same lesson, in order that our affections may be drawn from things below, and directed to the higher good above. I feel, also, that the tears you see me shed seem to dishonour my royal rank. Nevertheless, I believe that the wisest man may yield to emotion without degradation to his dignity, if only he obey the promptings of his grief with moderation and a due regard to manly honour. Upon this maxim, therefore, I take my stand; the while, however, my eyes overflow with fountains and rivers of tears. I know that it is our bounden duty to submit patiently to the will of God, who has established one universal law for mankind; for He has created us mortal to deliver us from the captivity of Death by the immortality of soul. He, therefore, who does not gladly pay this debt to God is of all men the most miserable: for he is a bad soldier who gives his captain unwilling service. My mourning increases in poignancy when I think upon your loss; for she loved you all with such fervent affection that she would have spared nothing to promote your welfare and solace. Alas! what a loss is ours! but as such is the decree of the Almighty Judge respecting our latter end, which we all dread too much as a perilous shoal on which we may founder, I render lowly obedience to the Great Pilot, and though ingulfed in the depths of anguish the most profound, I will spread my sail, and drift whither the winds of Heaven impel me. Nevertheless, pray all of you, that God will endow me with fortitude; and let us then proceed reverently to deposit her body in the sepulchres of our ancestors at Lescar."

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* Olhagaray.

Queen Marguerite died at the castle of Odos, in Bigorre, December 21, 1549, at the age of fifty-seven. The ceremonies of her lying-in-state were magnificent and prolonged. The queen's remains were visited by hundreds of her poor subjects of Béarn and Foix; and the tears shed over her bier formed a more glorious tribute of praise to her virtues than the elegies and eulogiums by which all the learned in Europe celebrated the memory of their benefactress.

The body of the queen was removed from Odos to Morlas, a little town situated near to Pau, sometime during the month of January, 1550. The queen's effigy, arrayed in royal robes, reposed on the bier, which was surrounded by the insignia of her exalted rank. The funeral obsequies of the queen were performed with great pomp in the cathedral church of Lescar, early in the month of February. Her old friend Gaston, viscount de Lavedan, officiated as grand-master during the solemn ceremonial. The States of Foix, Béarn, and Bigorre assembled to render the last homage to their beloved mistress, and marched in the funeral procession to the cathedral; but in accordance with regal etiquette, neither the king of Navarre nor the duke de Vendôme was present at the ceremony. These royal personages were represented by deputies; as was also Marguerite's nephew, the king of France, and the dowager-duchesse de Vendôme,* and the duchesse d'Estouteville.† The dukes de Montpensier, de Nevers, d'Aumale, and d'Estampes, the prince de la Roche-sur-Yon, the marquis de Mayenne, and the viscount de Rohan, also despatched ambassadors, with very costly retinues, to represent them at the funeral. The constable de Montmorency sent no deputy to perform for him this act of respect and homage to the memory of his earliest benefactress. The pall was supported by the vice-chancellor of Navarre, and by three of king Henry's chief privy councillors.

When the coffin was raised from its platform of state in the centre of the cathedral, to be transported to the tomb, the royal crown was borne before it by the count de Carmain, the sceptre by the sieur de Caucon, and the hand of justice by the count de Bussac. The mournful *cortège* was preceded by processions of bishops, ecclesiastics, and choristers.‡ The funeral oration on the death of queen Marguerite was composed in the Latin and French languages by an officer of her household, Charles de Ste. Marthe, a master of requests in the exchequer court of the duchy of Alençon. This oration is one of the most curious documents extant respecting Marguerite's private life; and it abounds in a multitude of anecdotes nowhere else on record. It is a significant fact that the task of rendering a last and chief public testimony to the virtues and excellencies of the queen of Navarre, should have devolved on a layman, however eloquent and capable of doing justice to the subject. Where were all the eminent prelates whom the queen honoured with her friendship and patronage, that none proffered to pay this homage to the memory of a princess whose name is inseparably connected with the history of her age? The learned and eloquent Du Chatel, bishop of Maçon,§ the bosom friend of Francis I., and Marguerite's devoted admirer, we may be sure would not have shrunk from recording his grateful praise of his late sovereign's sister, could he have done so in conscientious obedience to the church in which he ministered; nor would the priesthood generally have been backwards in expatiating in every pulpit throughout France upon the edifying repentance of a princess who, during the thirty-three years of her brother's reign, gave constant protection to reform, could they have substantiated the statement alleged to have been made by the Franciscan, Gilles Caillau.

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* Françoise, eldest sister of the duke d'Alençon.

† Adrienne d'Estouteville, countess de St. Paul, duchesse d'Estouteville. Marguerite's persuasions contributed to induce this lady to bestow her hand on the count de St. Paul.

‡ L'ordre que le Roy entend estre observé par les maistres des cérémonies sur l'enterrement de la royne Marguerite sa femme. Bibl. Roy., F. Dupuy, No. 324.

§ The bishop of Maçon delivered the oration at the funeral of Francis I.

But if the prelates of France were tardy in rendering homage to the memory of the illustrious Marguerite, the learned men of Europe celebrated her praises, and their sorrow at her decease in every form of composition The odes, poems, and epigrams, composed on the death of the queen of Navarre, if collected together, would fill a volume. Ronsard, Du Bellay, Daurat, Denisot, and an innumerable list of poets, dedicated their muse to her honour, and published laments on her premature decease. The celebrated Etienne Dolet composed a Latin ode,* greatly lauded, in which he commemorates in lofty language Marguerite's wisdom and learning, and the protection which she accorded to literature. The poet, Etienne Forcadel, in the following Latin epigram proclaimed the queen's wisdom and merit:—

"Huic Rex frater erat, Rex vir, mens docta, quid ultra?
Occidit. Heu! fateor Pallada posse mori!"

Valentine Denisot also composed this epitaph for the queen, which met with rapturous plaudit throughout Europe by the learned:—

"Musarum decima, et Charitum quarta, inclyta regum,
Et soror et conjux, Marguaris illa jacet."

Amongst the most beautiful and touching of the compositions inspired by the decease of the queen of Navarre, are the following lines written by the celebrated poet, Pierre Ronsard:—†

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* See Appendix No. V.

† Tombeau de Marguerite de Valois. Œuvres de Ronsard, Ecalogue, vi.

"Comme les herbes fleuries,
Sont les honneurs des prairies,
Et des prez les ruisselets,
De l'orme la vigne aimée,
Des bocages la ramée,
Des champs les bleds nouvelets.

"Ainsi tu fus, ô princesse!
(Ainçois plutost, ô déesse!)
Tu fus la perle et l'honneur,
Des princesses de nostre âge,
Soit en splendeur de lignage,
Soit en biens, soit en bonheur.

"Il ne faut point qu'on te fasse
Un sepûlchre qui embrasse
Mille termes en un rond,
Pompeux d'ouvrages antiques,
Et brave piliers doriques
Elevés à double front.

"L'airain, le marbre et le cuivre,
Font tant seulement revivre,
Ceux qui meurent sans renom,
Et desquels la sépulture
Presse sous mesme closture,
Le corps, la vie, et le nom.

"Mais toy, dont la renommée
Porte d'une aile animée,
Par le monde tes valeurs,
Mieux que ces poinctes superbes,
Te plaisent les douces herbes,
Les fontaines et les fleurs."

England rendered the most brilliant meed of praise to the learning and virtues of the queen of Navarre. Queen Elizabeth translated into her own tongue Marguerite's poem, "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse;"* and three sisters of the illustrious House of Seymour, Anne, Marguerite, and Jane Seymour, composed a hundred Latin verses in the queen's honour, and to express their affliction at her death. The poet, Nicholas Denysot, the preceptor of these learned sisters, edited their poem, which was published in Paris in the year 1551, under the title of "Le Tombeau de Marguerite de Valois," with translations appended in French and Italian.

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* See Note, page 138, vol. ii.

As Marguerite's patronage of the learned amongst her own countrymen had been universal, so all were eager to unite in her praise. From the learned enthusiast Guillaume Postel, to the most insignificant court poet, each consecrated to her memory some tribute of gratitude. The professors of the learned languages in the universities celebrated her magnificence and learning in Greek, Latin, and even in Oriental verse. Calvin, Béza, and Melancthon, in their various works, reverently mention her name. Montluc, bishop of Valence, and the celebrated Amyot, bishop of Auxerre, preceptor of the sons of Henry II., owed their education and advancement to the enlightened patronage of Marguerite, whose recommendation obtained them employment in the service of the state; and neither of these two illustrious prelates have forgotten to record the praises of their benefactress. The great historian De Thou, and Louis, and Scevole de Sainte Marthe, in their respective works, also render homage to Marguerite's patriotism, learning, and virtue.

As an author, the queen of Navarre, in her prose compositions and as a writer of "*nouvelles*," may rank amongst the first of the age. Her style is singularly free from the redundancy and puerility of diction which disfigure the writings of most of her contemporaries. The style of the "Heptaméron" is clear and pointed. The structure of many of the tales displays great powers of invention; while their sarcastic force rendered their author redoubtable to the profligate class which had so justly incurred her censure. Unhappily the freedom of imagery indulged in by the royal authoress renders her tales a closed book in these days; yet, let it be remembered that the strictest morality and purity of life is inculcated by the moral of all the narratives; and Marguerite errs only in the vigour and truthfulness with which she has dared to represent the flagrant vices of the age, without participating in them. In extenuation for the recurrence of descriptions which shock and revolt, it is to be recollected that such was not the tone of Marguerite's mind, but the tone of the *times*. The language, manners, and sentiments, which were considered courtly in the days of king Henry VIII., would in this age inspire disgust and reprehension; consequently, the writers of the sixteenth century ought not to be judged by the standard of the polished refinement which pervades society in this era of the nineteenth. The dialogues and scenes which disfigure the pages of the Heptaméron, were incidents habitual at the court of Francis I., the most polished, though doubtlessly the most corrupt society of Europe. All that is good, holy, and fervent in the writings of the queen of Navarre, the fruits of her piety and of her maturer years, emanated, under God, from her own pure spirit; while her horror at a system of religion which even under the cowl and the veil secretly sanctioned frightful enormities, induced the queen to do what nobody besides herself in her brother's realm dare attempt, and expose the fallacy of such a faith.*

The literary skill of Marguerite was much envied by her nieces, the princess Marguerite of France and the dauphiness Catherine; and they once resolved each to write a tale, and compare it with one of hers. When the merits of the three compositions were weighed, we are told that the two princesses were so ashamed of the inferiority of their productions that they cast them into the fire, and vowed never again to compete for literary excellence with the queen of Navarre. Marguerite's poetical compositions are of varied merit; the piety of all, however, is fervent and impressive. Many of her sonnets equal in grace and elegance the compositions of Ronsard and Clément Marôt, while her diction is always refined; other poems, again, when Marguerite affects the mystic strains and metaphors of Briçonnet's school of theology, are necessarily constrained and obscure. Marguerite was likewise the author of several comedies and pastorals.† Theology and the cultivation of her poetic genius formed the recreation of the middle and declining periods of Marguerite's life; her *nouvelles* remain on record, as the error of her more youthful judgment and years.

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* The great historian de Thou, whose uncle Adrian de Thou, canon of Nôtre Dame de Paris, edited the most beautiful MS. of the Heptaméron extant, especially excuses Marguerite for her authorship of the celebrated tales, on account of her youth (*ad juvenilem ætatem*) which showed little discretion in transcribing such records, however true they might be.

† See Appendix No. VI., for the list of the various literary compositions of the queen of Navarre; also for several of her hitherto unpublished poems, Appendix No. VII.

If it be asked whether the queen of Navarre persevered to the last in the principles of the reformed churches, it is contended that not a particle of evidence exists—excepting the unsupported testimony of the monk Gilles Caillau—to authorize the Roman Church in claiming Marguerite as an obedient member of its communion during the latter years of her life, more than at the period when she first made earnest intercession to her brother for the life of Louis de Berquin. Then, as on her death-bed, the queen participated outwardly in the ritual observances of the Romish faith; she subsequently made no retractation of the principles so offensive to the priesthood; and to the last hour of her brother's reign, she pleaded the cause of the persecuted reformers, and spent vast sums for their relief. The slightest submission tendered by Marguerite to the Romish Church, would have been joyfully accepted and proclaimed abroad by ecclesiastics, who throughout her life assailed her with virulent abuse for her heresy; and whose resentment, or rather what they termed their zeal for the faith, induced them to sanction attempts to compass by slander and assassination that requital which the exalted rank and power of the queen of Navarre left them no other means of achieving. A word spoken in homage of the orthodox faith would have bowed these fanatic preachers at the queen's feet, to admire the goodness and learning which they alone refused to recognise: yet Marguerite abstained.

It is, however, deeply to be deplored that queen Marguerite did not definitively avow with which church her sympathies rested, by a more decided line of action. The absolute commands of king Francis; the exigencies of politics; the dissensions of sects and parties in these the early days of the Reformation, and the timidity natural to her sex, all induced the queen to shrink from taking the part of a leader in the great movement pending in the Church. The fanatical spirit which pervaded France, and the necessity that the government found to conciliate all its subjects, in order to raise finances for the war, prevented the king from granting liberty of conscience, with permission to worship apart from the great majority of their countrymen. to the Lutherans. Marguerite, therefore, had but the alternative of affording the negative protection she did to the reformed church, or of placing herself at the head of a movement hostile to her brother's government.

The queen of Navarre assumed several devices and mottoes. Besides her favourite sunflower, with the words, "*Non inferiora secutus*," she bore as an emblem, a lily between two daisies (*marguerites*), with this inscription, "*Mirandum naturæ opus.*" She took for a device, in the second edition of her poem, "Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse," the words, "*Ung pour tout.*" In the queen's poem of "La Coche," her motto is, "*Plus vous que moy.*"

Marguerite founded, in 1535, the Hôpital des Enfans Rouges, Quartier du Temple, in Paris. This institution, which the queen richly endowed, was an asylum for orphans. Marguerite caused the children educated there to be called, "Les Enfans de Dieu le Père."[*] The costume of the establishment was red, at the desire of king Francis, who wished thereby to indicate that the children derived subsistence from the alms of the faithful. After the foundation of l'Hôpital Général in 1657, Marguerite's institution of Les Enfans Rouges was incorporated with that establishment.[†] The queen of Navarre also founded hospitals for the poor in the towns of Alençon and Mortagne-en-Perche. Her benefactions to the convent of Tusson in Angoumois, is the only monastic endowment Marguerite gave to the Roman Catholic Church.

The portrait which is inserted in the middle of the first volume of this work represents Marguerite at the age of from twenty-eight to thirty. The miniature from which the picture of the queen has been copied is preserved in the Bibliothèque Imperiale; it contains sixteen portraits of great beauty and interest. The duchesse d'Angoulême is represented sitting on a magnificent throne richly adorned with gold: on the steps of the dais, the author of a poem, called "Le Puits d'Amour," is kneeling, and presenting his book to the duchess. The queen of Navarre stands with one hand resting on a pillar of the throne; and her authoritative attitude indicates that she is addressing the assembly. On each side of the duchess d'Angoulême stand a group of seven young ladies of the court, arrayed in brilliant costume. The attire of the queen of Navarre is simple and elegant. The colour of her robe is pale silver grey. Her sleeves, which she wears wide and pendent, are lined with miniver. Her hood and veil are black—the hood being adorned with fine embroidery in gold.

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[*] Hilarion de Coste,—Eloges des Roynes, etc.

[†] La Force,—Description de la France.

A few other pictures of Marguerite exist in the Bibliothèque Impériale, and elsewhere in France; though for a princess of such renown, it is astonishing how rarely her portrait is to be met with. Two of these portraits have been engraved by Montfaucon*—one, a miniature of the smallest size, represents Marguerite receiving *une fleur de Marguerite* from the king of Navarre; the other picture pourtrays the queen a year or two before her decease. Marguerite wears a cap *à la Béarnoise*, which is singularly unbecoming to her: her robe, which fits closely round the throat, is trimmed with fur, and she carries a little dog in her arms. This portrait, which is far from giving a correct delineation of the delicate and intellectual features of the queen of Navarre, has been engraved several times.

The picture placed at the commencement of this volume represents Louise de Savoye at the age of twenty-three. The duchess is receiving a poem, entitled, "Vie de Nôtre Dame."† She sits under a canopy, or *ciel-royal*, draped with blue velvet, spangled with gold *marguerites*. Her dress is composed of violet satin, the only colour which custom then permitted a widow to wear. The robe of the duchess is very full; her sleeves are trimmed with a wide border of fur. She wears a necklace of slender links of gold. Her girdle is wrought of the same precious metal; and her hood is of black velvet. By the side of the duchess sits her son, afterwards king Francis I., then a beautiful child of six years old. His habit is crimson velvet, over which he wears a loose mantle of brown satin. A rosette of gold lace ornaments the cap of the young prince. The attitude and figure of the kneeling poet is most picturesque. Through the wide slashings of his surcoat of rich brown satin, a vest of carnation-colour is displayed: the poet's stockings are scarlet. The book which he is presenting to the duchess Louise is bound in crimson velvet, and fastened by clasps of gold. In the background of the picture is a garden with a trellised walk, from whence several ladies are watching the audience granted to the poet by their royal mistress. The principal lady of honour, who stands nearest to the duchess, is attired in crimson satin: her sleeves are furred with ermine. Opposite to her is a gentleman-at-arms, holding aloft his battle-axe. The spaniel sleeping at the feet of the duchess is probably the little dog whose loss Madame thus notes in her journal: "The 6th day of October, 1502, the little dog Hapeguai, who was loving and faithful to his master, died at Blevé." The colouring of this beautiful miniature is most gorgeous; and it is valuable as one of the few portraits which exist representing Louise de Savoye when in the bloom of youth.

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* Monuments de la Monarchie Françoise.

† This manuscript poem is still preserved in the Bibliothèque Impériale, No. 7306, petit in fol., vélin. It is enriched by thirty-six valuable miniatures, amongst which is the painting representing Louise de Savoye and her son prefixed to this volume.

THE END.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

Ballade.

Envoyée par le Roi à la Royne de Navarre,
1544.

C'est vous, Seigneur, pendant en ceste croix
Quy monstrés bien que, cloué et lyé,
Vous commandes aux princes et aux roys,
L'humble haulsant, le fier humilié.
Et je, ton serf, Seigneur, t'ay supplié;
Tu m'as ouy, selon mon seur espoir
En me donnant, ne m'ayant oublié
Conqueste, enfans, et desfense et pouvoir.

O seur, oyez que respond ce pendu:
—"Qui son estolle en mon sang lavera,
De tous périls il sera défendu,
Tant du présent que cil qu'il adviendra,
Et seurement son honneur défendra
En assaillant et seurement pourvoir,
Et sous ma main par longs jours conservra
Conqueste, enfans, et desfense et pouvoir."

Reviens donc, seur, afin que de ta veue,
Non de l'ouyr, ayes seur tesmoignaige
Combien de gloire en ta maison est creue,
Tant de conqueste, honneur, que de lignaige;
Et ton revoir y soit joinct dadvantaige,
Et tous ensemble rendons humble devoir
Au libéral qui rend pour peu de gaige
Conqueste, enfans, et desfense et pouvoir.

ENVOY.

Louenge à toy, ô infiny donneur,
Mon seul salut et mon certain savoir.
Tu m'as donné, dont je te rends l'honneur,
Conqueste, enfans, et desfense et pouvoir.*

Response.

De La Royne De Navarre au Roy,

1544.

Agneau occis dès le commencement,
Plein de vertu et de vie fonteine;
O bras cloués, frappant très fortement,
Rendant au Roy felicité pour peine;
Main, luy donnant benédiction pleine,
Pour tous ces biens devez estre de nous,
A tout jamais par gloire souveraine
Loué, servi, aymé et craint de tous.
Donné avez aux cueurs de ses amys,
De leurs desirs parfaicte jouyssance;
Rendu avez les meschants ennemys
Hors de moyen d'avoir esjouissance;
Très impuissants sont par vostre puyssance,
Fortifiant celuy qui vit en vous,
Le rendant plein de toute cognoissance
Loué, servy, aymé et craint de tous.

Amour saillant au cœur du crucifix
Donnant au Roy des ennemys victoire
Comme il vouloit; luy donnant par ung fils
Nom de grand père après honneur et gloire
Dont l'humble seur par la doulce memoire
De tant de biens sans cesser, à genoulx,
Soubhaite voir son frère après le croire
Loué, servy, aymé et craint de tous.

ENVOY.

O Christ, l'espoir de mon Roy et mon maistre;
Qui reposez en son cueur humble et doux,
Soyez en luy, et qu'en vous il puisse estre
Loué, servy, aymé et craint de tous.†

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* Bib. Roy., MS. Suppl. Fran., No. 2286. Published by M. Genin. Lettres de la Reine de Navarre.

† Ibid.

No. II.

ESPITRE DE LA ROYNE DE NAVARRE.

Envoyée au Roi par Frotté, avec un Salomon pour ses Estrennes, 1545.

Durant ce temps que la cruelle guerre
Menassoit fort, Monseigneur, vostre terre,
Voire et qu'enfin de tous costés et parts
Fut assaillie d'aigle et de lyepards,
Ne vous povant en ces lieux là servir,
Je desiray David vous asservir.
Il s'en alla sans arquebuze ou dart
Fors que sa fonde et nud, pour de soudart
Si bien servir qu'il fust de vous loué,
Et de son Dieu tous puissant advoué.

L'année après, plein de gloire prospère,
Dieu vous donna l'heureux nom de grand père,
En bénissant si fort vostre semence,
Qu'il desmontra n'estre par sa clemence
Moins bon amy de vous, son Christ et Roy,
Que d'Abraham, le père de la foy,
En vous faiant de tel heur triumphant
Par une foy et par nouvel enfant.
Dont Abraham, auquel le fis savoir,
Courut à vous, desirant de vous voir;
Car amour est union si louable,
Qu'elle ne peut chercher que son semblable.

Or, maintenant que par heureuse paix
Vous est de Dieu ce tant monstrueux faix
Ousté du tout, de vos subjetz aussy,
Que guerre fit long temps vivre en soulcy,
(Non soulcy seul, car quasi pis que morts
Ils ont languy durant ces durs efforts,)
Salomon, roy rempli de sapience,
Qui n'ignora jamais nulle science,
S'en va vers vous. Car de bon cueur s'applique
A vous servir; son siège pacifique,
Dont l'Escripture nous a tant dit de bien,
Va vous donner et n'y pretend plus rien,
Disant: "Le Roy en sera possesseur;
Je recongnoy qu'il est mon successeur:
Sapience ay sus tant biens desirée,
Mais le Roy l'a toute en luy attirée.
J'ay entendu ce qu' homme peult entendre;
Le Roy aussy; nul ne luy peult apprendre.

J'aymay la paix, toujours l'ay poursuivie;
Et pour l'avoir, le roy sa propre vie
N'a espargné ny tout ce qui est sien,
Sans refuser nul honneste moyen.
Or a la paix, ainsy que moy, certaine,
Mais plus que moy l'a acquise à grant peine,
Dont plus beaucoup il merite avoir gloire.
Or je confesse, et la chose est notoire
Que mieux qu'a moy luy appartient le lieu,
Siège de paix, fait de la main de Dieu.
Il se serra au siège non pareil
Et je m'en voy le servir de conseil;
En mes escripts, qu'il luy plaist approuver,
Il pourra bien ce qu'il aime trouver."

Ainsy s'en va, mais amour m'a induite
De luy servir jusqu'à vous de conduite.
Il vous dira la grant joye qu'a faite
Ce pouvre peuple, voyant la paix parfaite
D'entre les deux plus forts piliers du monde,
Et que le lys avec la pomme ronde
Est tant uny que ce n'est plus qu'ung cueur.
Dieu n'a voulu permettre que vainqueur
L'ung fust de l'aultre, afin de les contraindre
Après la guerre à cette paix attaindre;
Car par aulx veult que la foy confirmée
Soit, et aussy l'Eglise reformée,
Et d'une part oustées les heresies,
De l'aultre aussy les vaines fantaisies,
Et que la foy nous face en toute guise
En triumphant triumpher sainte Eglise.
O vous heureux, monseigneur, qui veillé
Avez pour nous, et sy bien travaillé
Que nous pourrons soubz vous en seur repos
Tenir de vous très louables propos,
Et louer Dieu, qui vostre entendement
A converty à tel appoinctment,
Par la bonté duquel nous voyons mis
Frères en ung qui furent ennemys.*

No. III.

Chanson Spirituelle, composée par la Royne de Navarre.

Je n'ay plus ny père, ny mère,
Ny seur, ny frère,

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* Bib. Roy., MS. Suppl. Fr., 2286.

Sinon Dieu seul auquel j'espère;
Qui sus le ciel et terre impère
    La hault, la bas
    Toutpar compas
    Compère, commere
    Voicy vie prospere!

Je suis amoureux non en ville,
Ny en maison, ny en chateau,
Ce n'est de femme, ny de folle,
Mais du seul Bon, puissant et beau,
C'est mon Sauveur,
    Qui est vainqueur
    De peché, mal, peine, et douleur;
    Et a ravy à soy mon cœur,
    Je n'ay plus ny père, ny mère, &c.

J'ai mis du tout en oubliance
Le monde, et parens, et amys,
Biens et honneurs en abondance,
Je les tiens pour mes ennemis:
Fy de telz biens,
    Dont les lyens
    Par Jesus Christ sont mis à riens,
    Afin que nous soyons des siens.
    Je n'ay plus ny père, ny mère, etc.

Je parle, je ris, et je chante
Sans avoir nul soucy ny tourment;
Amys, et ennemis je hante,
Trouvant par tout contentement;
    Car par la Foy
    En tous je voy
    Leur vie, qui est, je le croy,
    Tout en Tout, mon Dieu, et mon Roy.
    Je n'ay plus, etc.

Or puis que Dieu est leur vie,
Et que je le croy Tout en tous,
Il est mon amy, et m'amye
Père, mère, frère, et epoux;
    C'est mon espoir,
    Mon seur scavoir
    Mon estre, ma force, pouvoir,
    Qui m'a sauvé par son vouloir.
    Je n'ay plus, etc.

Las! que fault-il plus à mon âme,
Qui est tirée en sy bon lieu,

Sinon se laisser en la flamme,
Brusler de ceste amour de Dieu?
Et en bruslant
Se consolant
D'amour qui rend le cœur volant,
Et sans fin la bouche parlante.
Je n'ay plus, etc.

Amys, contemplez quelle joye
J'ay, estant delivrez de moi
Et remis en la seure voye
Hors des tenebres de la Loy!
Ce recoufort
Est sy tres fort,
Que rien plus ne désire au Fort,
Qu'estre uny à luy par ma mort.
Je n'ay plus, etc.

No. IV.

Chanson Spirituelle.

Autres pensées faites un mois après la mort du Roy.

Las, tant malheureuse je suis,
Que mon malheur dire ne puys,
Sinon qu'il est sans esperance:
Desespoir est desia a l'huys
Pour me jetter au fond du puits,
Ou n'a d'en saillir apparence.

Tant de larmes jettent mes yeux
Qu'ils ne voyent terre ne cieux
Telle est de leurs pleurs abondance;
Ma bouche se plaint en tous lieux,
De mon cœur ne peult saillir mieux,
Que soupirs sans nulle allégeance.

Tristesse par ses grans efforts
A rendu sy foible mon corps,
Qu'il n'ha ny vertu ny puissance;
Il est semblable a l'un des morts,
Tant que le voyant par dehors,
L'ou perd de luy la congnoissance.

Je n'ay plus que la triste voix
De laquelle crier m'en vois,
En lamentant la dure absence
Las! de celuy pour qui vivois,
Que de sy bon cœur je voyais
J'ay perdu l'heureuse presence.

Seure je suis que son esprit
Regne avec son chef, Jesus Christ,
Contemplant la Divine essence,
Combien que son corps soit prescript,
Les promesses du Saint Ecrit
Le font vivre au ciel sans doutance.

Tandis qu'il estoit sain et fort,
La foy estoit son reconfort,
Son Dieu possedait par creance,
En ceste Foy vive il est mort,
Qui la conduit au très seur port,
Ou il h'a de Dieu jouyssance.

Mais, hélas mon corp est banny
Du sien, auquel il feut uny,
Depuis le temps de notre enfance!
Mon espoir aussi est puny,
Quand il se trouve desgarny,
Du sien, plein de toute science.

Esprit et corps de dueil sont pleins,
Tant qu'ils sont convertiz en plains;
Seul pleurer est ma contenance,
Je crie par bois et par plains,
Au ciel, et terre me complains
A rien fors à mon dueil ne pense.

Mort qui m'a fait ce mauvais tour,
D'abattre ma force et ma tour,
Tout mon refuge et ma defénce,
N'a sçu ruiner mon amour,
Que je sens croistre nuit et jour,
Que ma douleur croist et avance.

O mort, qui le frère as dompté,
Viens doncques par ta grand' bonté,
Transpercer la sœur de ta lance,
Mon deuil par toy soit surmonté,
Car quand j'ay bien le tout compté,
Combattre te veulx à outrance.

Viens doncques, ne retarde pas,
Mais cours la poste à bien grans pas,
Je l'envoye ma deffiance.
Puisque mon frère est en tes lacs,
Prends-moy afin qu'un seul soulas,
Donne a tous deux esjouissance.

No. V.

Ad Margaritam Valesiam, Reginam Navarræ.

Proli suœ Pallas timens, et anxie
Affecta, ne artium rudes
Vulgusque iners tractaret illos aspere,
Injuriaque lœderet,
Quos ingenio elegantiori nobiles
Et perpolitos litteris
Hic mitteret doctarum ab antris Virginum,
Te litteratis obtulit,
Cujus potenti auctoritate et gratiâ
Tegantur atque commode,
Et vim imperitœ plebis et diras minas,
Vitent furentium hostium.
Nil ergo mirum si receptos in tuam,
Fidem rogatu Palladis
Doctos colas, ames, tuearis, et libens
Quibus potes rebus juves.
Ira jam iniqui frendeant, ira crepent
Laudi id tibi atque gloriæ,
Dari molestè qui ferunt et detrahunt,
Quo clara flores nomini.
Mirabitur te et laude multâ posteris
Mandabit illustris cohors,
Cohors alumnorum Minervæ, cui hactenùs
Prœsto finisti omni loco.

Stept. Doleti, Carmina, lib. ii. Lugdun, 1538.

The two following poems were also composed on the decease of the queen of Navarre :—

Epitaphe de Marguerite de Valois, Royne de Navarre.

Cy gist un corps par le quel Dieu faisoit,
Ses haulx secrets aux siens voir et comprendre.
Cy gist ung corps le quel si bien disoit,
Que les mondains ne le pouvoient entendre.
Voicy le corps auquel Dieu fist descendre,
Ung vif esprit, une ame à luy ravie,
Qui nous faisoit le Verbe saint entendre
Autant ou mieulx que Henoc, Jehan ou Marie.

De ce sainct corps qui n'est rien sinon terre,
L'esprit jadis desiroit [illegible] haulx lieux,
Par quoy après avoir fait forte guerre,
Le corps est mort deux foys en ces bas lieux :
Mort est de mort humaine pour son myeulx,
Puys en Adam pour en Christ avoir vie,
Car il sçavoit le Verbe precieux.
Autant ou mieux que Henoc, Jehan ou Marie.

Aussy pour vray lors que l'esprit partit,
Hors de ce corps qui fut tant charitable,
Le ciel sacré en deux se departit,
Par quoy l'on veid une chose admirable;
Car Dieu ainsy que ung feu espouvantable
Dessus le dos eut de descendre envie,
Pour celle avoir qui luy fut agreable,
Autant ou mieulx que Henoc, Jehan ou Helye.

Quiconque sois donques qui trouveras,
En ce tunbeau ceste lettre petite,
A ung chacun ainsi dire pourras;
Voicy les os de saincte Marguerite,
Voicy les os de celle qui habite,
Avecques Dieu, c'est la Royne accomplie,
Qui aux humains a sa parolle ditte,
Autant ou mieulx que Henoc, Jehan ou Helye.*

Epitaphe de la Royne de Navarre.

Celle qui fut comme un divin oracle,
Seulle sans pair en son siècle nommée,
Et du grand Roy, son frère, tant aimée,
Nous a quitté le mortel habitacle,
Dieu, qui les mis, ces deux, par grand miracle,
En si hault lieu, voulant la nuict blasmée,
Chasser des yeux de la terre abismée,
Et de sciences y faire un clair spectacle
Ja leur clairté jusqu' aux Mores luisoit,
Qui à milliers au jour les conduisoit:
Ores Seigneur qu' est ce que tu viens faire,
Aiant estainct soubz ces ombres funèbres,
Du Roial chef le double luminaire,
Las, nous veux tu remettre en nos tenebres? †

No. VI.

Notice on the Literary Works of Marguerite, Queen of Navarre.

1. L'HEPTAMERON des Nouvelles de très illustre, et très excellente Princesse, Marguerite de Valois, Royne de Navarre, remis en son vray ordre, confus auparavant en sa première impression, et dédié à très

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* This epitaph, which is written on the last leaf of the MS. *des Prisons*, No. 7576, de la Marre, Bibl. Roy., is published in the appendix of l'Heptameron, t. i., edited by M. Le Roux de Lincy.

† Tombeau de Marguerite de Valois. This sonnet was composed by F. de Morel, Embrunois.

illustre, et très vertueuse princesse Jeanne, Royne de Navarre, par Claude Gruget, Parisien. A Paris, Sertenas, ou Cuvelier, 1559, in 4to.

The Bibliothèque Royale contains twelve different manuscript editions of queen Marguerite's celebrated tales. The first edition was published in 1558, by Pierre Boaistuau. The editor dedicated his work to Marguerite de Bourbon, duchesse de Nevers, but he carefully avoids naming the queen of Navarre as the author of these *nouvelles.* The text of Boaistuau's edition of the Heptaméron, or l'Histoire des Amants Fortunés, under which title he published the collection, is much mutilated: all the passages bearing on the religious dissensions of the times, and especially on Marguerite's own views on religion, are carefully suppressed. The order of the Tales, moreover, was not observed; an omission which was thought to detract greatly from their effect. The following year, therefore, another edition of the Tales appeared, edited by Claude Gruget, who carefully restored the order of the narratives, and some of the text suppressed by Boaistuau. He, moreover, acknowledged the queen of Navarre as the author of the *nouvelles,* upon which he bestowed the title of l'Heptaméron. Gruget dedicates his book to Jane, queen of Navarre: in his prefatory address to the queen he says: "I should not have presumed, madame, to present to you this book of *nouvelles,* composed by the late queen your mother, if her name had not been either omitted or excluded in the first edition of her work, and the entire plan of the narratives so changed, that by many they cannot be recognised as the same composition." Many editions of the Heptaméron have since appeared, all copied closely from the text of Boaistuau and Claude Gruget, and published under various titles, such as, "Contes et Nouvelles de Marguerite de Valois, Reine de Navarre, or Heptaméron Français;" or, "Les Nouvelles de Marguerite, reine de Navarre," &c. A beautiful edition of the Heptaméron, revised and carefully collated on all the manuscripts of Marguerite's work preserved in the Bibliothèque Royale and elsewhere, has been lately published by La Société des Bibliophiles Français, under the auspices of M. Le Roux de Lincy, and *which may be deemed the only edition which does perfect justice to the* style and sentiments of queen Marguerite.

2. Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses, très illustre Royne de Navarre. Lyon, Jean de Tournes, 1547, in 8vo, 2 vols., publiés par Jean de la Haye, valet-de-chambre de la royne.

This volume is a collection of most of queen Marguerite's poems, many of which were published separately, at different periods of the queen's life: it contains the following works:—

1. Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse: ou elle recongnoist ses faultes et pechez, aussi les graces et benefices à elle faictz par Jésus Christ, son espoux. La Marguerite très noble et precieuse s'est proposée à ceulx qui de bon cueur la cerchoient.
2. Discord de l'esprit et de la chair.
3. Oraison de l'âme fidèle.
4. Oraison à Jésus Christ.
5. Four sacred dramatic pieces.—"Comédie de la Nativité d

Jésus Christ; La Comédie de l'Adoration des Trois Rois; La Comédie des Innocents; La Comédie du Désert."

6. Le Triomphe de l'Agneau.
7. Complainte pour un prisonnier.
8. Chansons spirituelles. Of these there are thirty-two, a sonnet, and one rondeau.
9. L'Histoire des Satyres et Nymphs de Dyane.
10. Quatre epistres, addressées au roy François, et une cinquième au roy de Navarre malade.
11. Les quatre Dames et les quatre Gentilhommes.
12. Comédie: deux Filles, deux Mariés, la Vieille, le Vieillard etes quatre Hommes.
13. Farce de Trop, Prou, Peu, Mo ins.
14. La Coche.
15. Poesies diverses.

The remaining poetical works of the queen of Navarre not inserted in the "Marguerites de la Marguerite," are:—

1 Dialogue entre l'auteur et l'âme saincte de Charlotte de France, sa nièce, imprimée à la suite du Miroir de l'ame Pecheresse. Edition de 1533.
2. Epistre familière d'aimer Dieu.
3. Epistre familière d'aimer Christiennement.
   (Both these epistles are published with Le Miroir de l'Ame Pecheresse, edition of 1533.)
4. Eclogue, publieé à Pau, J. de Vingle, 1552.
5. Deux sonnets Italiens.
6. Farce, Le Malade.
7. Farce, L'Inquisiteur.
   (These two dramatic pieces appear for the first time in the Appendix to the Heptameron, vol. 1, published by La Société des Bibliophiles François, 1853.)
8. Miroir de Jésus Christ Crucifie, Paris, 1550.

Several epistles addressed by queen Marguerite to her brother, and preserved in the Bib. Roy., Suppl. Fr., No. 2286, have been published by M. Aimé Champollion Figèac, M. Génin, and M. Le Roux de Lincy, in their respective works.

The works of the queen of Navarre hitherto unpublished are:—

1. Seventy-four Rondeaux. See Appendix, p. 11.
2. Le Pater Noster, composé par Madame la Duchesse d'Alençon.
3. Vers sur ung Rosier au Jardin des Celestins à Lyons. See Appendix, p. 12.
4. Petit œuvre devot et contemplatif, composé par la Royne de Navarre.
5. Epitaphe de Jouan, et de Coquette, fol et folle, faict epar la Royne de Navarre.
   (These poems are preserved in the Bib. Roy. Recueil des Poésies de François I., er et de Marguerite Royne de Navarre—Bibl. de l'Arseal No. 108.)

No. VII.

Rondeau.

COMPOSE PAR LA ROYNE DE NAVARRE.

En Attendant.

En attendant l'heure du desir digne
Nostre vie doibt estre malheureuse,
Si du desir souvent ne monstre signe.

En attendant ceste heure glorieuse,
Ou gist le vray triumphe et seul bonheur
Vaine gloire nous doibt estre ennuyeuse.

En attendant l'indicible douleur,
Nous debvons bien reputer tout plaisir,
Peine, travail plain d'amère douleur.

En attendant que tout nostre désir,
Soit accomply en très grant contentesse
Debvons porter ça bas tout desplaisir.

En attendant le trésor de richesse
A nous promis, debvons tenir tous biens,
De ce monde a grand charge et tristesse.

En attendant le lieu ou ne fault rien,
Tout ce qu'avons debvons bien despriser,
Ne l'estimans que pourriture et fiens.

En attendant que nous verrons briser,
Rompre et gaster nos desirs et nos faits,
Bien peu debvons nos grands euvres priser.

En attendant la descharge du faiz,
De nostre corps prenons plaisir pour peine
A cheminer après la plus parfaicte.

En attendant que notre chair sort saine
Sans que nul mal la puisse travailler,
N'ayons ennuy de maladie humaine.

En attendant le très doux sommeiller,
Et vray dormir prenons en pacience,
Quant pour l'honneur de Dieu nous fault veiller.

En attendant du goust de sapience,
Estre remplis à la table eternelle
Joyeusement debvons faire abstinence.

En attendant que par joie immortelle,
Chantons sans fin faisons a force larmes
De notre âme la force claire et belle.

En attendant que nos pieds soient fermes
En seur repos, cheminons vistement
Tenant du bon pelerin les bons termes.

En attendant le très beau vestement
De charité dont serons tous couverts,
Selon l'estat, vestons nous simplement.

Sur ung Rosier au Jardin des Celestins à Lyons.

Sur ce rosier d'immortelle verdeur
Les cinq roses d'immortelle couleur,
Nous demontre d'amour la véhémence
Sentons ung peu qu'elle en est l'odeur,
Et en mengeons pour gouter la saveur,
Bien qu'il y ait d'amertume apparence.

Mais contemplant qu'elle fut la souffrance
De Jesus Christ qui a pris notre offense,
Et la peine portée à la rigueur,
Qui nous estoit donnée en penitence,
Tres justement par Divine ordonnance,
Pour le peché du prevaricateur.
Tout notre amer nous semblera doulceur,
Et vray repos ennuy, travail labeur,
Vie la mort, toute craincte, assurance
Moqueries et hontes grand honneur
Desprisement et injures, faveurs
Prenant par mal du vray bien la semblance.

Oserons nous vivre à nostre plaisance,
Dessoubz un chef qui a si grand souffrance,
Est couronné d'épines? Quelle horreur
Vivre en ung corps joyeuse contenance,
Qui a son chef navré en toute oultrance,
D'importable et mortelle douleur!

Voyez comment par mains, par pieds, par sueur,
Donne son sang monstrant de quelle ardeur
Il nous ayme, quand la perseverance
De son amour na laisse pour la péur
Des ennemys, né pour le grande fureur,
Jusques au bout suivons son ordonnance.

O charité, bonté, doulceur, clémence,
Qui est le cueur, si ung petit y pense
En nous son Dieu, seul fils du Createur,
Qui nous daigne, couvrant nostre ignorance
Prenant le corps de mort, des notre infame
Acquerre nom de vray et seul Saulveur!

Seul advocat et doux mediateur,
Qui effaçant nostre faulte et erreur,
Faites l'accord, la paix, et l'alliance,
Entre nous tous qui meritons l'ardeur
Du feu d'enfer anvers notre faiteur.

Je deffaut la parolle et éloquence
Pour hault louer le corps plein d'innocence
Qui à la mort pour nous en pacience.
Soustien et vivificateur
De nos âmes, mortes, reparateur
Taire me fault quant à parler commance.

London: M. S. Myers, Printer, 22, Tavistock Street, Covent Garden.

7

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